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Alcuin Hemmen, O. S. B. / Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti

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Karl S. Weimar / "Damian," Posthumous Novel of
Hermann Stehr

Ernst Jockers / Gerhart Hauptmann — zum Abschied

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— R. O. Röseler, *Editor*.

FOR TABLE OF CONTENTS PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 510

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ENRICA VON HANDEL-MAZZETTI

AD MULTOS ANNOS

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While bombs were bursting over Germany and Austria, American students of German literature thought frequently of their suffering artist friends over there and breathed a prayer for their safety. The fate of these unfortunate victims of the ghastly art of war excited the sympathy and understanding of intelligent commanding officers of the allied armies of occupation, once the slaughter was ended. With the cooperation of one such commanding officer, Colonel Lloyd M. Hanna of the American Military Government of Linz, communication has been established with the great Austrian novelist, Baroness Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti. She herself, grateful and happy, writes that she is working again, after "Ihre große Nation uns aus banger Trübsal befreit hat."¹ We in America rejoice with her not only over her recent liberation but also at the fact that this year she celebrates her diamond jubilee.

Our refined lady passes over her recent hardships in silence. According to the same Colonel Hanna, she is now day-blind and can work only with electric light. During the past winter she endured low temperature in her home at Spittelwiese 15, Linz, in order that there might be sufficient fuel for homes with small children. A cousin called her need to the attention of the AMG, and fuel wood was graciously and promptly supplied. Her reticence allows us only to conjecture how grave the inconveniences were which the Nazis placed in her way. She restricts herself to the general term, "während der bangen Terrorzeit."² Our novelist wrote *Graf Reichard III* during this time but was unable to publish it, since her entire work was boycotted and forbidden by the Nazis. Shortly thereafter she found refuge with the nuns of St. Elizabeth outside Linz, where she endeavored to calm her anxiety by preparing her *Tagebuch* for publication.

¹ From a letter to the present writer, dated March 15, 1946.

² *Ibid.*

Handel-Mazzetti relates the fate of her great friend and co-pioneer in the Catholic literary revival, Karl Muth, who died early in 1945 in Munich, "after unspeakable sufferings which the National Socialist regime had brought him."³ Her publishing firm, Kösel & Pustet, "has been liquidated after most trying persecution by the Nazis and will not rise again."⁴ Soon after the liberation, a representative of the Rex Publishing Co., Lucerne, Switzerland, called on Handel-Mazzetti, and a contract was drawn up to publish *Graf Reichenbach III* and her *Tagebuch* late in 1946 or early in 1947. The same firm obtained publishers' rights for all of her novels, which have been out of print for years; new printings should start appearing in the not too distant future.

On the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Baroness, it seems fitting to review her life and to look into her literary production. The writer will attempt, therefore, in this article to sketch for his readers a picture of the life of Handel-Mazzetti, to survey her novels, to ascertain her place in the history of literature, and to review the research done in her works.

Biography

The ancestry of Handel-Mazzetti presents composites of nationalities and religions, out of which came unity and harmony. As early as 1454 members of the Handel family were living at Dettingen, Holland; two centuries later a Hans Handel migrated to Swabia and, as burgomaster of Wessmain, acquired a coat of arms. In the eighteenth century three generations of the family served in Austrian diplomacy. Paul Anton von Handel assisted Count Philipp Stadion and Prince von Metternich at the Congress of Rastatt and held diplomatic portfolios in Mergentheim, Munich, and Vienna. As a French hostage in Heilbronn, he married a Dutch girl, Julie Frederike Freiin von Prehn, in 1802; the Austrian line of the family descends from this marriage. Kaiser Franz awarded Paul Anton a patent of Austrian nobility in 1819. Heinrich von Handel, third son of Paul Anton, married Carolina Mazzetti, daughter of Milan's famous jurist, in 1835. Four years later Ferdinand I elevated Antonio Mazzetti to Austrian hereditary baronage; when Mazzetti died in 1841, the Emperor of Austria allowed his son-in-law, Heinrich, to affix "Mazzetti" to his family name.

Enrica's father, Heinrich von Handel-Mazzetti (1839-70), entered upon a military career after attending Kremsmünster abbey school. In 1868 Heinrich married Irene von Nemes-Tackskand, whose mother was a Dutch Protestant and whose Hungarian father was a Josephistic Catholic. On Jan. 10, 1871 Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti was born as the second child of this marriage, after the death of her father in the preceding September. Enrica is by blood one-half Hungarian, one-fourth Italian,

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

and one-fourth Austrian-Dutch-German; she has always lived in Austria, and the German language has been the channel of her art. Enrica and her sister were reared by their mother in the strict Catholic home of the elder Handel-Mazzettis.

The only thing unusual about Enrica's girlhood was her writing verse at the age of ten. Frau Irene spared no efforts to educate her girls in the prevalent and proper cultural subjects and interests of the time. She herself instructed them at home and sent them also to Franz Mair's middle-class school. Enrica took lessons in painting and likewise received instruction in piano. Under the tutelage of the Germanist, Wiedenhofer, and Robert von Zimmermann, rector of the University of Vienna, the young ladies became well read in German and foreign literatures. As befitted their social rank, they were enabled to visit the homes of literary people and scenes of literary interest when traveling with their mother.

Then came the year at St. Pölten boarding school, 1866-87, which made indelible impressions upon the sisters of fifteen and sixteen. Of the various English Madames of the Sacred Heart who taught Enrica, Mother Francisca Zimmermann, sister of the above-mentioned rector, influenced her most. That Enrica soon entered into the spirit of the school the following words testify:

In St. Pölten fühlte ich mich zuerst vom Hauche intensiver kirchlicher Frömmigkeit angeweht; nicht lange stand ich scheu beobachtend abseits. Sehr bald zog mich jedoch der ignatianische Geist, der hier in liebenwürdigster Form in Erscheinung trat, unwiderstehlich an, und ich gab mich demselben willig und ganz eigen.⁵

The seed fell on rich soil and brought forth fruit a hundredfold. Enrica's experiences during this year reflect themselves in the first half of her literary production, especially in her heroines. In St. Pölten Catholicism became the warp and woof of Handel-Mazzetti's ideology; her Weltanschauung anchored itself so firmly in the spirit of the Counter Reformation that she later was able to portray this period most masterfully.

Instruction was resumed with Doctor Zimmermann with emphasis upon creative writing, when Enrica returned from boarding school. He encouraged her to write and indoctrinated her with the principles of Realism. Handel-Mazzetti's first short work to appear in print was a dialog, *Die Braut des Lammes*, the martyrdom of St. Agnes. She contributed short stories to Catholic periodicals of limited circulation: *Waisenkind*, *St. Angelablaß*, and *Die christliche Familie*. In 1895 her uncle Erasmus, governor of Upper Austria, arranged for the printing of a few of her articles in the *Wiener Zeitung*. The editor appreciated her

⁵ From a letter quoted by Paul Siebertz, *Enrica von Handel-Mazzettis Persönlichkeit, Werk und Bedeutung*, Munich, 1930, p. 35.

ability and invited her to join his staff, which brought her a wider reading public.

The same year her sister, Elvira, entered the community of the Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, a teaching order. After her mother's death in 1901, Enrica moved from Vienna to Steyr in Upper Austria, where she lived with her father's brother and sister. Three years before the outbreak of the first World War Handel-Mazzetti moved to Linz, where during the war she spent much of her time visiting hospitals and cheering wounded soldiers. She could not endure actual nursing work without great emotional disturbance. It was very difficult at times to overcome the despondence and rancor of the poor disillusioned and distraught men who frequently exacted promises from her which were hard to fulfill. In dispensing religious articles she helped many a wounded soldier to compose himself to meet his inevitable fate.

In appearance she is somewhat delicate; for years, especially after 1928, she suffered from migraine headaches. In meeting the public which consists of her few visitors, she possesses the poise and simple graciousness of generations of nobility. Her small face and high, well-formed forehead reflect her emotions, particularly when she speaks. Her large curious eyes dwell searchingly upon her guest as if to ask: "What sort of person are you, where have I met someone similar to you?" She never married, probably from the conviction that the duties of marriage and those of authorship would infringe upon each other.

Among the many admirable traits of Handel-Mazzetti's personality are her sympathy and love. "But the greatest of all of these is charity;" this Pauline commandment became so entirely her own that Christian charity can be said to be the leitmotiv in the charming symphony of her life and work. Her sympathy manifests itself in participation in the pain and sorrow of others, frequently to the extent that she puts herself to great inconvenience for them. A versatile conversationalist, this peaceful and serene soul endeavors untiringly by word and deed to bring happiness to others, and she tends to reward favors generously. She always seeks to conquer her opponents with Christian charity, and her almsgiving claims most of the royalties from her books. Endowed with a receptive German temperament, a warm heart, and clear understanding, she creates art with psychological penetration and lively phantasy. She is not expressionistic but conceals her inner life like a very objective artist. The art sense of the Swabian, the enthusiasm of the Hungarian, and the lovable and tractable disposition of the Austrian rival one another in her artistic production.⁶

Handel-Mazzetti's writing, to which she devotes herself most conscientiously, assumes paramount importance as her life work. On Sundays she discusses her current production, critics, and correspondence with

⁶ Franz Berger, Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti's *Der deutsche Held*, gekürzte Schul- und Volksausgabe mit einer Einleitung und Anmerkungen, Paderborn (undated), p. III.

her secretary. While composing she demands isolation; her friends know this and do not make surprise visits, and the curious receive no consideration. In every one of her works much prayer and meditation contributed enlightenment, so that they bear the stamp of a type of inspiration. Her motive has always been the glory of God and the honor of His Mother, Mary; her entire life and work anchors itself in religious faith and in the Catholic Church.

She has a high concept of the poet's mission, which is directly to delight and indirectly to edify. Handel-Mazzetti is convinced that the folk-soul must be rescued through an inspiring idealism expressed in art, as she says in the following:

Unsere Zeit braucht Aufbau der Seele und des Idealismus, heute gilt es mehr denn je: wer nicht mit Christus sammelt, der zerstreut. Wenn man der dumpfen Sinnlichkeit unserer Zeit ein "Paroli" bieten will, dann muß man mit den besten Waffen überlegener Kunst, aber auch mit ganz blankem Schilde auftreten. Es handelt sich ja hier um das Höchste: um die Rettung der Volkspsyche vor fortschreitender Verderbnis . . . Das religiöse Moment unterliegt keiner Mode, es ist alt wie die Geschichte des Volkes Gottes auf Erden. Es wird in Dichtungen wieder klingen bis zum letzten Tage.⁷

"Germany needs chaste sons," answers our novelist to those who under pretense of art really pander to lower inclinations. To her mind social renaissance can come only through a return to the Christian moral law. She considers it her duty to influence society by writing good literature and values recognition of this from an old friend as her highest praise.⁸

Her Novels⁹

The life of Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti has not been externally eventful, wrapped up as it has been in the Catholic Church and in her writing. One learns to know her best in her literary art. Although to superficial observation she seems to have been too oblivious of, and isolated from her time, investigation discloses how profoundly conscious she has always been of the important questions affecting her own people and society in general. At this point, a brief survey of her novels will illustrate her deep awareness of, and spontaneous reaction to, historic and contemporary issues. An ethical strain with emphasis upon the necessity of religious tolerance runs through her works.

Handel-Mazzetti was appalled, when she observed the trend in Austrian religious thought in the 1890's. Men were arguing vehemently that being a Catholic was incompatible with being a good German, an idea which was basic to the *Los-von-Rom* Movement. The growing prevalence of

⁷ Quoted by Siebertz, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

⁸ Letter of Cardinal Frühwirt to Baroness Handel-Mazzetti, July 16, 1928, quoted *ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

⁹ Her other works are negligible by comparison and are omitted in this paper.

this notion and the publicity given to it emboldened many Lutherans to employ questionable methods of proselytizing. Consequently, difficulties and discords arose between Catholics and Lutherans, which closely resembled those of the earlier Austrian religious war. With sharp womanly intuition Handel-Mazzetti recognized the possibility of another national religious crisis: in the hope of deterring her countrymen from religious wrangling and of instilling into their minds the necessity of practical religious tolerance,¹⁰ she turned to the baroque age and revivified it with all its conflicts and inhumanities in her early works. In her four first and greatest novels she created characters from the Counter Reformation, who served to embody and illustrate doctrinal religious intolerance and who ultimately, after suffering induced by religious fanaticism, were able to arrive at practical religious tolerance.

In *Meinrad Helmpingers denkwürdiges Jahr* (1900) she takes her readers back to 1711, when Catholicism had definitely gained ascendancy in Austria.¹¹ Meinrad is a monk of Kremsmünster, who befriends little Edwin, a Protestant, and enrolls him in the abbey school. Misunderstandings about the difference of religion arise with other teachers, but not with Meinrad, to whom Edwin habitually flees to have the cares soothed away from his small brow. Suddenly Edwin's father, Augustus MacEndoll, removes the boy from school and takes him along to northern Germany. The elder MacEndoll contacts a Jewish printer in Berlin who will publish his atheistic book. Word of this is whispered to the Lutheran Inquisition, and after much torture Augustus MacEndoll pays for his atheism with his life. Edwin returns to Austria and becomes a Catholic. This first work won many sympathetic friends who were impressed by the author's spirit of doctrinal religious intolerance in union with practical religious intolerance. Some felt, however, that she was partial to Catholics and unfair to Lutherans.

In her next work, *Jesse und Maria* (1906), Handel-Mazzetti offered the public an epic novel of 1658, in which a painting of the Virgin Mary causes religious conflict between Catholics and Lutherans. The Lutheran Jesse von Velderndorff determines to wipe out Catholicism in the valley of the Danube, but a crude picture of the Virgin Mary, a symbol and focal point of Catholic devotion, must first be destroyed. By intrigue he obtains the aid of Alexander Schinnagel, the husband of Maria. Before Alexander carries out his dastardly deed of cooperation, his Catholic conscience reproaches him, and he confesses to Maria. She

¹⁰ In order to disperse intellectual fogginess, a definition of this term is hereby given. Religious tolerance signifies the disposition to allow the existence of beliefs differing from one's own. This is sub-divided into doctrinal religious tolerance, by which is meant the tolerating of error as such, into practical religious tolerance, by which is understood the esteem shown toward the erring person even though we condemn his error, and into political religious tolerance, by which is designated the policy of the State under which the practice of various religions is permitted.

¹¹ The dates refer to publication of the book editions of the novels. *Meinrad* appeared serially in Franz Eichert's *Die christliche Familie*, 1897-99.

has Jesse summoned before the Catholic Inquisition; upon provocation, he completely loses control of his temper and shoots the presiding officer. Although the chief Inquisitor recovers, Jesse must pay the death penalty. Maria regrets the turn of events but is powerless to stop them; respecting now their religious convictions, she atones for past acts of hatred by kindness toward the young Lutheran and his family. Jesse repents for having persecuted his Catholic neighbors and wants them to enjoy freedom of worship. Although Handel-Mazzetti wrote this novel just as objectively as *Meinrad*, many Catholics were displeased with some of the incidents included.

Die arme Margaret (1910) has its setting in Styria of 1626. A young Catholic lieutenant, Ernst von Herliberg, attempts fanatically to convert a beautiful Lutheran widow to his faith, the religion of the vast majority. Under the influence of wine, he attacks her. Margaret grasps the scapular suspended from Ernst's neck and begs him to spare her for the sake of the Holy Mother Mary, whose image adorns the religious article, and of his own mother. This deters him from his vicious purpose, and Margaret rescues her child and flees into a rain storm. Jakob Zettl, a Catholic citizen, discovers mother and babe lying exposed in the storm and succours them. Zettl accuses Herliberg before the court of justice, and the sentence is death. Margaret pleads in vain for clemency toward Ernst; the latter learns too late to respect the religious belief of others.

Going further back in history to 1614, Handel-Mazzetti used in *Stephana Schwertner* (1912-14)¹² material taken from the history of Styrian Catholicism. At this time the Catholics were the persecuted minority, and in a presentation of those stirring times the author paints the representatives of her own religion in apparently brighter colors than the Lutherans. Conditions before the Thirty Years War are pictured here as unbiasedly as those of later years were mirrored in her preceding novels. With girlhood memories of the Kulturkampf in mind, she portrays the political religious intolerance under which Styrian Catholics suffered three centuries earlier. This trilogy is, therefore, a commemorative work which marks the apex of her production.

Stephana, a girl in her teens, and a certain Father Albert lead the Catholics in opposition to the discriminatory laws enacted by governor-judge Joachim von Händel. She is arrested and condemned to stand in the pillory; Heinrich von Händel, captain of the guard, compassionates her and releases her from this shameful torture. Love for the comely Catholic maid blossoms in his Lutheran heart, and, regardless of his father's protests, he expresses it. In desperation, the elder Händel resorts to a slanderous attack on Stephana's integrity of character; he knows that he will win his son and victory over the Catholics if he succeeds. Meanwhile Stephana has rejected Heinrich's proposal of marriage because

¹² *Deutsche Rundschau* (1912-13) carried the first two parts of this great trilogy; the third part was not ready in time for serial publication. *Die arme Margaret* had previously appeared in its pages.

of a secret vow of virginity. A combination of circumstances and misunderstandings convinces Heinrich that the accusation of his father is true; his love turns to anger, and he stabs her to death. He is condemned to death as a murderer, despite all his father's efforts to save him. The foul smear upon Stephana's honor is proven false, and she is vindicated. Realizing the havoc caused by his bigotry, judge Händel finally allows freedom of worship to Catholics of Styria.

These four stories attain a high level in the field of the German novel. They rank as the major works of Baroness Handel-Mazzetti and must be read by anyone who seeks to obtain a complete understanding of her art.

In the late 1890's Handel-Mazzetti expressed herself directly in regard to her own time in artistic form which she revised later and published in 1913 as *Brüderlein und Schwesternlein*. In *Ritas Briefe* (1915-21) she continued with the same heroine, and in *Ritas Vermächtnis* (1923) she took up the same subject matter once more. In the Rita stories, which form a unique trilogy, she throws the light of religious tolerance upon Freemasonry as she understands it.

She continued after the war to present her reaction to national crises by revivifying scenes and lives from the historical past which in some way paralleled the conditions of her own time. To a Germany humiliated in national defeat and shaken by internal political murder and discord, she offered encouragement by presenting the character of the Archduke Charles of Austria in *Der deutsche Held* (1920). She returns here to post-Napoleonic history and depicts the influence of the Archduke in bringing about the spiritual redemption of George Tessenburg, an officer who, guilty of murdering a civilian, is thus enabled to find a true love of God and a finer sense of patriotism once more. In the Karl Sand trilogy (1924-26) she aims to bring help to German youth in its post-war spiritual chaos.¹³ Both Catholic and Protestant youth are to be impressed and inspired by the example of patriotism and chastity as embodied in the spirit of Karl Sand of 1819-20. In this story a Catholic girl, Else Walch, testifies to the moral character and uprightness of the young Lutheran. *Frau Maria* (1929-31) further displays the historical consciousness of Handel-Mazzetti. In 1930 Germany commemorated the fourth centenary of the Diet of Augsburg, at which Philip Melanchthon attempted to conciliate the two religious parties. The Baroness advocates religious tolerance in her new trilogy, the subject matter of which includes the figures of King Augustus the Strong of Poland, the Lutheran deaconesses of Quedlinburg, and Christoph Schubarth.

Her most recent works revert to the Austrian baroque: *Die Waxenbergerin* (1934), which celebrates the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the liberation of Vienna from the Turks, and *Graf Reichard I and II* (1938-39).¹⁴ Her message now points to present-day dangers;

¹³ The three parts of the trilogy are entitled: *Das Rosenwunder*, *Deutsche Passion*, *Das Blutzeugnis*.

¹⁴ *Graf Reichard III* is mentioned in the introduction to this article.

as the Catholics and Calvinists fought beside one another against the heathen Turks in 1683 and cooperated in 1691, so today all Christians should unite and cooperate in practical religious tolerance against a new common enemy to Christianity.¹⁵ Handel-Mazzetti, like many other Christians, realizes the menace to European culture and religion, which looms threateningly in the East in the new Asiatic atheism, Communism. This brief resumé of her novels illustrates how in them she reacts with keen perception to the vital issues of her time.

The Place of Handel-Mazzetti in German Literature

It is difficult within the narrow compass of a few pages to convince readers of the prominence of a particular author. It was, therefore, deemed advisable to invoke the assistance of eminent literary scholars and historians in determining Handel-Mazzetti's place and significance in German literature. After several general appraisals of her ability and art, specific attention will be given to her pioneering role in the Catholic literary revival and to observations on her style of writing.

Richard M. Meyer maintained that her gifts of womanly emotion and sympathy give to her art more power than is to be found in all her Austrian compatriots.¹⁶ She wrote the epic novels of the Counter Reformation in a style altogether commensurate with that dynamic movement. The spirit, language, and mode of thinking of the period became second nature to her, while in historical perspective and interest she revealed a mastery beyond the reach of Walter Scott.¹⁷ Meyer, in his review of *Die arme Margaret*, placed Handel-Mazzetti as a novelist among the more important writers of her time and declared that she excels all of them in some particulars.¹⁸

Erich Schmidt brought to the attention of his fellow countrymen Handel-Mazzetti's excellence as a cultural and historical novelist and praised her characterizations and her use of language.¹⁹ As one of Germany's foremost and best-known scholars, his opinion had much

¹⁵ Cf. Pope Pius XI's call for intercredal cooperation in *Divini Redemptoris* ("On Atheistic Communism") and Wilfrid, Parsons, S. J., and Courtney J. Murray, S. J., *Intercredal Cooperation* Catholic Association for International Peace, Washington, D. C., 1943.

¹⁶ "... einen großen Roman hat nicht David, nicht Schnitzler, nicht Bahr oder Bartsch geschrieben — wohl aber diese Frau." *Die deutsche Literatur des XIX. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin, 1910, II, 210.

¹⁷ Richard M. Meyer, *Die Weltliteratur im XX. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart, 1913, p. 174.

¹⁸ "Frau von Handel-Mazzetti schildert, Zahn analysiert, Mann beschreibt, Frensen erzählt. 'Spannung' im alten Sinne des Wortes erregt nur das Abenteuer der armen Margaret . . .

"Die stärksten Schilderer gewaltiger Erregungen sind in unsrern Tagen Frauen: Selma Lagerlöf und Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti." Richard M. Meyer, "Vier große Romane," *Deutsche Rundschau*, CXLII (1910), 146 and 149.

¹⁹ "Nochmals: eine tapfere, unbefangene, religiöse Frau hat das schmerzliche Geflecht dieser Menschenschicksale künstlerisch verschlungen und entfaltet." "Ave Maria," *Deutsche Rundschau*, CXXX (1907), 314-15.

influence. Karl Muth, the Catholic critic, proclaimed her as an exponent of the highest ideals of Catholic thought and literature;²⁰ and Heinrich Spiero, another critic, stated that from every viewpoint she succeeded preeminently in re-creating for German literature the religious historical novel.²¹ As Catholic history had been treated with prejudice in German literature, it offered a fertile field for her ability. Wolfgang Schumann in his discussion of *Stephana Schwertner*, even though he criticized her sharply from the aesthetic viewpoint, admitted that Handel-Mazzetti had made an important contribution to the German novel.²² These are among the most outstanding acknowledgements before the first World War of our author's position as one of Germany's foremost novelists. Karl Muth published *Jesse und Maria* in *Hochland* in 1904 and 1905, and this brought her the recognition of Catholic progressives. Richard M. Meyer and Erich Schmidt helped to introduce her early work to a wide circle of German intellectuals; Julius Rodenberg published *Die arme Margaret* and later *Stephana Schwertner* in his periodical, *Deutsche Rundschau*. *Das literarische Echo* and *Die Neue Rundschau* were two of Germany's distinguished magazines whose editors gave early recognition to Handel-Mazzetti's artistic ability.²³

In post-war German literature the name of Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti shone with ever increasing lustre. Eduard Engel follows the verdict of most competent judges in classifying her as one of the most powerful masters of German prose and as one who enjoyed the recognition of such fellow writers as Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, Wilhelm Raabe, and Peter Rosegger. Engel gives equal space to Handel-Mazzetti and Ricarda Huch.²⁴ Oskar Walzel²⁵ and Josef Nadler²⁶ reaffirmed in the late twenties the judgment of their predecessors. Anselm Salzer,²⁷ Johannes Mumbauer,²⁸ and Eduard Castle²⁹ handled her works most thoroughly with individual treatment; there was no longer doubt that

²⁰ "Jesse und Maria' ein literarischer Rück- und Ausblick," *Hochland*, III 2 (1905-06), 691-708.

²¹ "Der neue historische Roman," *Das literarische Echo*, XI (1908-09), 1485-94.

²² "Stephana Schwertner," *Ibid.*, XVII (1914-15), 137-45.

²³ Friedrich Stieve, "Enrika von Handel-Mazzetti," *Die Neue Rundschau*, XXII 1 (1911), 731-33.

²⁴ *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur des XIX. Jahrhunderts und der Gegenwart*, Leipzig, 1929.

²⁵ *Die deutsche Literatur von Goethes Tod bis zur Gegenwart*, Berlin, 1929, 238 ff.

²⁶ *Literaturgeschichte der deutschen Stämme und Landschaften*, Regensburg, 1928, IV, 922-28.

²⁷ *Illustrierte Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den ältesten Zeiten bis zur Gegenwart*, Regensburg, 1932, V, 2098-2113.

²⁸ *Die deutsche Dichtung der neuesten Zeit*, Freiburg i. B., 1931, pp. 338-60.

²⁹ "Der Unterschied zwischen Mittel und Zweck, zwischen Stoff und Ziel ist hier sehr gering. Wäre der Dichterin die Kulturgeschichte nur Mittel, so hätte sie nicht so viel Quellenstudium nötig. Handel-Mazzetti geht völlig in der Zeit auf, die sie darstellt, denn nur so kann die Stimmung des Werkes sich ganz dem Leser mitteilen." Nagl, Johann und Zeidler, Jakob, *Deutsch-Oesterreichische Literaturgeschichte*, . . . Unter Mitwirkung hervorragender Fachgenossen, Wien, 1937, IV 2198.

she was one of the major contemporary authors. And Paul Fechter quite recently offers us one of the very best discussions of Handel-Mazzetti's works.³⁰ He appreciates the intuitive womanly element, as well as the deeply cultural vein in her production. All critics agree that her art possesses superior qualities in respect to the portrayal of history, to characterization, language, and spiritual outlook.³¹

At the beginning of the present century the majority of Catholic literary artists stood aloof from the main stream of German literature. This isolation had not improved the quality of their various genres. The first critic to recognize this sad state of affairs and to call attention to it was Karl Muth of Munich. He founded the literary, aesthetic, and cultural magazine, *Hochland*, in 1903 and introduced the young Austrian novelist Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti, to greater Germany. She ended a theoretical discussion and dismissed forever the stigma of inferiority from which Catholic literature had suffered immediately prior to her appearance.³²

In Muth and Handel-Mazzetti literary criticism and literary creation stand shoulder to shoulder in pioneering the German Catholic literary revival. They laid the foundation on which contemporary artists and critics have built. In creative art, Gertrud von Le Fort, Ruth Fuchs-Schumann, Franz Herwig, Heinrich Federer, Peter Dörfler, Hans Carossa, Friedrich Schnack, Leo Weismantel, and Max Mell all are indebted in greater or lesser degree to these two pioneers. In the field of criticism, outstanding literary historians like Oskar Walzel, Josef Nadler, Eduard Castle, Phillip Witkop, and Günther Müller were inspired by Karl Muth's example of objective evaluation.³³

The spontaneously ethical influence in the work of Handel-Mazzetti springs from her family background and her Catholic education. While at boarding school, her religion, as she tells us, became part of her emotional life, although she enjoyed at the same time an enviable intellectual appreciation of her faith. This particular feature of her personality as an artist accounts for the instinctive religious expression which permeates her novels. The immediacy of faith transports her readers into a world dominated by elemental religious feeling which resembles closely, it has been said, that of Dostoevski.³⁴ This prevents her work from assuming the nature of an intellectual treatise.

By means of her creative imagination and literary technique Handel-Mazzetti is able to project before the reader a panorama of human life and history on a large scale, which resembles that of the great epics. It

³⁰ Vogt und Koch, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, Vom Naturalismus bis zur Literatur des Unwirklichen* von Paul Fechter, Leipzig, 1938, III, 367-68.

³¹ Heinrich Schnee, *Enrica Freiin von Handel-Mazzetti, Großdeutschlands Dichterin*, Paderborn, 1934, p. 38.

³² W. Schumann *op. cit.*, p. 138.

³³ Theodor Rall, *Deutsches katholisches Schriftum, Gestern und Heute*, Einsiedeln, 1936.

³⁴ P. Fechter, *op. cit.*, pp. 368, 370.

can be said that she achieves artistically what the old epics did naively. She calls herself a folk-epic writer and admits that she learned much from the Bible, the *Nibelungenlied*, and the *Divina Commedia*.³⁵

She aims especially to present the color and life of the times with artistic objectivity in the cultural and historical picture which she unfolds before her readers in every one of her novels. Prior to Handel-Mazzetti both Lutheran and Catholic readers in Germany had become accustomed to a definite bias in the historical novel. Regardless of assailants from both sides, Enrica, like the great historian of the Popes, Ludwig Pastor, followed the principle that truth must out whether it pleases or pains. In a spirit of artistic freedom she says:

Ich habe viel gewagt, die Zeit . . . streng wahrhaft, ohne
Schönfärberei dokumentenmäßig darzustellen . . . Viele . . .
werden zögernd fragen: . . . ist es wahr? — Ja, es ist wahr.³⁶

The importance of a particular historical panorama inspires Handel-Mazzetti to such an extent that single towering figures soon arise above the total landscape, and embodied in them she beholds the larger outlines of the whole. She emphasizes characters more than action and explains that she never constructs a plot, but that it must find its origin in the characters.³⁷ Her heroes hardly ever coincide with the big names of history, while her heroines are usually creations of her imagination. Having selected her period and the setting, she develops the pivotal characters and in doing so employs historical material as well as imaginative invention.

In her novels the principals usually divide into two groups: a manly hero of good physical stature and mental accomplishments incurs guilt by an act of violence and either perishes or performs difficult penance, and over against such epic-like heroes, courageous, pure womanhood pits its moral strength and conquers. It is true, her characters are not complicated but are simple and straightforward, whether in good or evil. Because of the great pride of her heroes and their consequent harshness and cruelty, they invariably suffer defeat and frequently develop into destructive agents. They are full of vitality and will power and are by no means the victims of forces outside themselves. It is this rigid will power which enables them to endure martyrdom for their cause. Handel-Mazzetti portrays intense suffering boldly and uncompromisingly. Her characters often perish with a resignation in their cause that reminds one of the fortitude and courage of the heroes of the old epics, who sacrificed themselves gladly for their ideals.

Handel-Mazzetti Research

The scriptural verse about a prophet not being recognized in his

³⁵ K. Muth, *op. cit.*, pp. 697-98.

³⁶ From a letter quoted in Siebertz *op. cit.*, p. 252.

³⁷ Eduard Korrodi, *Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti, die Persönlichkeit und ihr Dichterwerk*, Münster i. W., 1909, p. 153.

own country seems to be especially true in our author's case. Her first recognition in the nature of special monographs came from Switzerland. Eduard Korrodi,³⁸ as early as 1909, produced a short study of her personality and work; with surprising appreciation and in the spirit of Erich Schmidt and Karl Muth, he singled out artistic excellences in her early productions. Handel-Mazzetti admirers found interest and pleasure in Marquerite Anklin's study,³⁹ which revealed Karl Schönherr's idealistic and linguistic indebtedness in *Glaube und Heimat* to our author's work.

The first doctoral dissertation was submitted in Holland by Bernard Speekman, S. J.,⁴⁰ on the sources and composition of *Stephana Schwertner*. Another study of similar type was Maria Bracht's dissertation on the last trilogy, *Frau Maria*.⁴¹ Three dissertations treat the formal side of Handel-Mazzetti's art. The first Austrian dissertation to do so was that of Hedwig Molak-Sahlinger.⁴² Two Frankfurt theses discuss her method of composition and her archaic devices of style.⁴³ Münkel's study takes high place as a work of thorough scholarship. Adolf Buder, S.J., treats of many subjects briefly in his presentation of the religious problems in her novels.⁴⁴ The writer of the present article recently engaged in research at the University of Michigan; his dissertation investigates religious tolerance in her novels.⁴⁵

For our novelist's sixtieth anniversary in 1931, the Kösel-Pustet publishing firm, which brought out all except two of her works, presented the reading public with a "Festschrift."⁴⁶ Paul Siebertz was general editor and contributed much valuable biographical data. Molak-Sahlinger, Kröckel, and Münkel reprinted the gist of their dissertations and added other important material. Rudolf Henz offered an illuminating chapter on the entire literary production of Handel-Mazzetti, and Anton Dörfer in a brilliant essay on her work and literary career emphasized her important position among the leading writers of the time. This volume contains so much significant information and such well-balanced criticism

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti und Karl Schönherr, Gedanken zum neuesten Literaturstreit*, 2. Aufl., Berlin, 1911

⁴⁰ *Quellen und Komposition der Trilogie "Stephana Schwertner" von Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti*, Groningen, 1924.

⁴¹ *Quellen, Aufbau und Stilmittel der Roman-trilogie "Frau Maria,"* Wien, 1937 (unavailable).

⁴² *Das Barocke in den Dichtungen Enrikas von Handel-Mazzetti*, Wien, 1925 (unavailable).

⁴³ Josef Kröckel, *Das Kompositionsgesetz in den Romanen der Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti*, Frankfurt, 1926 (Maschinenschrift). Schwester Rhabana Münkel, *Die archaisierenden Stilmittel der Erzählkunst der Frau Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti*, Frankfurt, 1929.

⁴⁴ *Religiöse Probleme in Handel-Mazzettis Geschichtsromanen*, Prag, 1926 (unavailable).

⁴⁵ Alcuin Hemmen, O. S. B., *The Concept of Religious Tolerance in the Novels of Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti*, The Abbey Press, Atchison, Kansas, 1946.

⁴⁶ P. Siebertz, *op. cit.*

that it rates as a sine qua non for all future investigation in Handel-Mazzetti.

This essay is only a humble effort to honor a great author on the occasion of her seventy-fifth birthday; as such, it has reviewed the life and novels of Handel-Mazzetti, has considered her place in German literature, and has listed the works of research in her art. Assuming the role of spokesman, the writer and his readers rejoice over the past glorious achievements in literature of Baroness Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti and wish her many more happy years as the fruit of her labor.

Addendum

The opinion of Handel-Mazzetti concerning her "disciples" might also be of interest. She lists the following as such, whether they realize their "dependence" or not; Ilse von Stach (*Sendlingen von Vayhera*); Paula Grogger; Marie Tetras (*Die Herzschläge einer kleinen Stadt*); the Swiss: Heinrich Federer, Maurus Carnot, Odilo Zurkinden, and Anna Richli; and Peter Dörfler (*Judith Finsterwälderin*).⁴⁷ Handel-Mazzetti singles out the works noted as especially illustrative of affinity with one or the other of her novels. She humbly states that in many cases she only awakened the dormant artist in the souls of these writers. She writes:

Ihre Kunst hat sich dann ganz selbständig entwickelt, und gemeinsam blieb uns nur das Ideal, das katholische Glaubensempfinden, der Wille, das Größte und Beste für Gottes Reich auf Erden zu wirken.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Letter to the writer, dated March 15, 1946.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*



THREE GERMAN NOVELS OF EDUCATION

III.

R. M. Rilke's *Malte Laurids Brigge*

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In Christine Touaillon's lucid article "Bildungsroman (-Entwicklungsroman-Erziehungsroman)"¹ neither *Hyperion* nor *Der Nachsommer* nor *Malte Laurids Brigge* are mentioned. Only in the case of Stifter can one find fault with the omission. Hölderlin's book suggests so many other things that one can easily forget that it is also a novel of education. The designation 'Bildungsroman' fits *Malte* even more loosely. In *Hyperion* the letter-writer announces his intention to review his former life and then does it in a long, logical, and chronological sequence. In *Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge* we discover at first only a disconnected collection of diary entries, the heterogeneous character of which is almost fastidiously emphasized. If there is an 'Entwicklung' hidden in all this disorder, it is camouflaged to the point of being indiscernible.

The degree to which the reader is likely to grant the status of a 'Bildungsroman' to any of the three books depends also on their form. The three books have in common the fact that their authors definitely set out to write 'novels' and speak of 'novels' during the years (about six years in each case) while they labored over their unyielding subjects; but in the end none of the three dared call his finished product a 'novel'. Yet *Nachsommer* is a novel after all; *Hyperion* is a coherent prose poem; *Malte* is a sequence of poems-in-prose.

In that respect *Hyperion* stands right in the middle. It shares with the novel *Nachsommer* the logical and chronological action, and with the poems-in-prose of *Malte*, the transfiguration of the individual situation into ecstatic language, language *per se*, poetry. *Nachsommer* is continuous, *Hyperion* is but coherent, *Malte* is only a sequence.

That minimum, however, the character of a sequence, we must claim for *Malte*. Where there is sequence, there is some modicum of development, there is a trace of the 'Entwicklungsroman'. We admit, it is no 'Erziehungsroman' at all; but we shall endeavor to show that it is a 'Bildungsroman'.

1.

It is generally believed that Rilke began work on *Malte* on February 8, 1904.² But that was the beginning of the actual writing; and, if we

¹ Merker-Stammler, *Reallexikon d. dt. Lit. gesch.* I (1926), 141-5.

² "Dann fing ich im Februar eine größere Arbeit an, eine Art 2. Teil vom Lieben-Gott-Buch." And thus several times in the letters, 3-17-04, 4-15-04, 4-29-04.

understand some remarks of E. Jaloux and A. Betz correctly, the fictional chapters written at that time were abandoned later. The date at which Rilke's mind really started to work on the book is the date on the first page of *Malte*: "11. September, rue Toullier." Rilke lived on Rue Toullier only during September 1902. And if he fixes particularly September 11 as the starting date for *Malte*, it is because he wanted that date to contain a ciphered dedication to Rodin. On September 11, 1902, he had written to Rodin — Had indeed solemnized the words by writing, although he saw him daily — :

"Ce n'est pas seulement pour faire une étude, que je suis venu chez vous, — c'est pour vous demander: comment faut-il vivre? Es vous m'avez repondu: en travaillant.

.... Et c'est la grande renaissance de ma vie et de mon espoir que vous m' avez donné.

C'était hier dans le silence de votre jardin que je me suis trouvé moi-même."

From that day he dates "the renaissance of his life;" and we know, it was true in several ways. The decade which follows is determined for Rilke by one locale, Paris; by one personal influence, Rodin; by one book of poetry, *Neue Gedichte*, and by one book of prose, *Malte*. While *Neue Gedichte* fixed the impressions he got from this locale and this influence, *Malte* elaborated the transformations which he underwent: it became Rilke's 'Bildungsroman'.

How intimately he thought *Malte* connected with his own development, as a man and as an artist, is expressed in a letter of May 12, 1904. He finds three different words for 'development':

"Umso mehr will ich das, als ich mich jetzt in Entwicklungen und Übergängen fühle (in Wandlungen, welche Schauen und Schaffen in gleichem Maße betreffen), die langsam vielleicht zu der Möglichkeit eines *toujours travailler* hinführen. Die Arbeiten, die ich mir vornehme sind . . . Mein Neues Buch (dessen feste, lückenlose Prosa eine Schule für mich ist und ein Fortschritt, der kommen mußte, damit ich später einmal alles andere — auch den Militärroman — schreiben könne)."

The last sentence not only adds the words "Schule und Fortschritt" to the three above, but goes so far as to classify *Malte*, the 'Bildungsroman' of his adult development, as a 'Vorschule' to the 'Erziehungsroman' of his adolescence.

The strange thing happened that Rilke grew beyond the experiences to which he had predestined his *Malte*, and that he had to hold himself back from new experiences:

"Warum ich mich zurückhalte? . . . : es mag sein, daß es um des Malte Laurids willen geschieht, den ich zu lange aufgeschoben habe. Bis dorthin bin ich so weit mit ihm eines, als ichs sein muß, um die Notwendigkeit zu ihm zu haben und die Zustim-

mung zu seinem Untergang. Zu weit darf ich nicht über sein Leiden hinaus, sonst begreif ich ihn nicht mehr, sonst fällt er mir fort und ab, und ich kann ihm nicht mehr die ganze Fülle seines Todes geben." (9-8-08)

Here the lyricist Rilke betrays himself. Any writer of fiction is above an identification with his hero which almost forces him to die by the end of the final chapter. But the lyricist can only write what he himself experiences. Rilke, who wished to concentrate upon the death of Brigge, saw his scheme endangered by the sight of a new salvation (it happened to be Buddhism); but he resisted. He was afraid lest in this salvation Malte should be involved.

Rilke was right, more so than he liked. He did not make of Malte what he wanted. He made of him essentially only what he himself had become. And as the poet was saved, so was his "Other Self": and the poet never knew!

Finally Rilke succeeded in immersing himself in this one labor. He thought it was epic identification of himself, the author, with his creature; but it was nothing else than his old lyrical identification of his creation with himself, the poet. In any case, days of complete self-satisfaction resulted, and one finds pages of letters to his publisher, which are so happy and assured that they resemble Stifter's letters to Heckenast, as nothing else in Rilke resembles anything in Stifter:

... "especially at a moment when he is experiencing in it such singular joys and progress as my present work has been affording me all these last weeks . . . I have the feeling of transmitting myself with this book, far and surely, beyond all danger of death." *

When the book is completed, the poet insists on the independent existence of Malte;⁵ but we do not believe him. Fifty poems in *Neue Gedichte* and a hundred letters tell us that Malte is Rilke, only exaggerated and rendered expressive even more than he is in his letters.

After the book is done, after his gospel is concluded, the time of the exegesis begins. There is a curious doubting and faltering in the analyses that recur in his letters. And he arrives at the final attitude of warning 'disciples' against that book:

"Ich sehe seit einer Weile ein, daß ich Menschen, die in der Entwicklung ihres Wesens zart und suchend sind, streng davor warnen muß, in den Aufzeichnungen Analogien für das zu finden, was sie durchmachen; wer der Verlockung nachgibt und diesem Buche parallel geht, muß notwendig abwärts kommen." (2-11-12)

Thus the book which was begun as a continuation of the *Stories about God*, a "so much farther stage of development of the same thought

* *Letters of R. M. Rilke 1892-1910* (transl. Greene-Norton), p. 344 (1-2-09).

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 362 (4-11-10).

cycle”⁶, turned out to be negative. In the joy of the last phase of work, Rilke had confidently written to Kippenberg:

“Now I am training for myself . . . a massive enduring prose, with which it will be possible to make absolutely everything. It would be glorious after that to continue or daily to begin anew with life’s whole boundless task.”⁷

“After that” he did not continue and he did not begin anything anew. On the contrary, this book, which he had always viewed as an initiation, a ‘Vorschule’, left him so hollowed out that once, “Dreikönigstag 1913,” he wrote in his own diary a page which sounds like an aftermath of that “Journal of His Other Self,” but also like a necrologue:

“Eigentlich war er längst frei, und wenn ihn etwas am Sterben hinderte, so wars vielleicht nur der Umstand, daß er es schon einmal irgendwo übersehen hatte.”

2.

The words with which Hölderlin introduces the last book of *Hyperion*, “Nun führ ich weiter dich hinab, hinab bis in die tiefste Tiefe meiner Leiden,” these words might introduce the whole of *Malte*. *Malte* is all descent, from the beginning on. The book traces a formation, a development; but they are negative, descending movements.

Moreover, the development factor is obliterated by the form of the “Note Books,” by the now introspective, now retrospective character of *Malte*’s entries. The time factor is not without similarity to that in Hyperion’s letters, which describe now his present status now his past experiences. But while the mood of the letter-writing Hyperion is varied excessively by the past events, is ‘dissimilated,’ *Malte* assimilates the varied experiences of the past to his present mood; they all acquire the grey monotony of his present despair.

Yet, the queer novel gives us the fragments of an odd education. The education is as varied as it is one-sided; and it is as teeming with results, reactions and effects as it is wanting in causes. Hard as it is to grasp the development in the book, it is easy to recognize changes, many changes; because the changes are under a magnifying glass: exaggerated into the grotesque.

However, we first seek in *Malte* for the other side of the educational novel, for that part of its program which does not relate the education of an individual but attempts the education of an audience.

Perhaps the most famous entry⁸ is the one which starts: “Ich glaube, ich müßte anfangen, etwas zu arbeiten.” It contains the most ambitious program of educational writing ever conceived:

⁶ Letters, 154 (4-29-04).

⁷ Letters, 344 (1-2-09).

⁸ pp. 25-31 in *Ges. Werke*, V (1927). The entry has three parts; the famous one is “Um eines Verses willen . . .”

"Ist es möglich, daß man noch nichts Wirkliches und Wichtiges gesehen, erkannt und gesagt hat . . . ?

Ist es möglich, daß man trotz Erfindungen und Fortschritten, trotz Kultur, Religion und Weltweisheit an der Oberfläche des Lebens geblieben ist. . . ?

Ist es möglich, daß die ganze Weltgeschichte mißverstanden worden ist?"

Malte asks seven such questions, and to each one he answers: "Ja, es ist möglich." Those pages are overbearing and vapid. Yet Malte does not feel the superficiality and incongruity. He concludes: "Der Nächstbeste, der welcher diesen beunruhigenden Gedanken gehabt hat, muß anfangen, etwas von dem Versäumten zu tun."

This feeling, "that nothing real has been said yet," and the determination to make up for that, would thus form the fountain head from which all of *Malte* flows, the motivation for the whole book. But why then, is it not the opening of the book, why does it come only after many other entries? Because this program, so emphatically proclaimed by Malte, is not universally valid, is perhaps not valid at all. It is understandable only in a particular situation, the situation outlined in the preceding entries. The mind which proclaims that it wants to make up for all past literature is a sick mind. But there is a terrible logic in its madness, and a fulminating poetry in the execution of its program.

An entry like the one just described, laden with manifest theory, will not turn up again in the course of the book. But there are similar ones, pages where the development, the (self-) education become more apparent than in others. Let us call them 'development entries.' Let us try to reconstruct the novel of self-education from them exclusively.

The next development passage is at the end of the entry about the torn-down houses (p. 65). There Malte throws off his mask and shows us his approaching terminus: death. Almost in the beginning of the book we are let in on the secret: we have to do with a dying man. with this entry, the entire development acquires its definite outline. The re-interpretation of all life, which the program entry promised, now appears in a different light. Now we grant him that a revaluation is necessary, since he needs to evaluate life from the standpoint of the dying. We also can foresee what a queer, weird 'Bildungsroman' this is going to be.

That passage might be called the 'terminus' entry. The next stage, which we might simply call 'the change,' is mild and convalescent in comparison. It is that sketch of a letter which grandiloquently over-emphasizes the "changes" Paris has wrought in Malte:

"Ich bin diesen Versuchungen erlegen, und das hat gewisse Veränderungen zur Folge gehabt, wenn nicht in meinem Charakter, so doch in meiner Weltanschauung, jedenfalls in meinem Leben. Eine vollkommen andere Auffassung aller Dinge hat sich unter diesen Einflüssen in mir herausgebildet . . . Eine veränderte

Welt. Ein neues Leben voll neuer Bedeutungen.... Ich bin ein Anfänger in meinen eigenen Verhältnissen." (p. 89)

The sketch vaguely traces the story of a love from which he ran away, is still running away, towards a goal which he dreads and to which he yet sacrifices everything.

There is a last development entry at the end of the first volume; but chronologically it is an antecedent of 'the change.' We may call this antecedent 'the romance.' It does not contain Malte's past so much as it does Abelone's. It is impossible to deny the richness of the three pages, even in their educational contents. We see there two separate lives, fully executed, past, present and future, and their fatal entanglement and disentanglement.

While those four entries, the 'program,' the 'terminus,' the 'change,' the 'romance,' are the focal points where the developmental lines of the novel are concentrated enough to dominate entire entries, there are numerous other points at which the development comes to the surface at least momentarily.

When the end of the first volume brings, after the entry of the 'romance,' the entry on the tapestries of the Lady with the Unicorn, the intention is clear: the one counterweight against Malte's poverty and dread of death, against loneliness and wilful loss of love, is art. With all his might he adds weight to this counterpoise, it is his one possible salvation. This is not art as a pastime, not a more or less amateurish play with it, not even the more or less expert practice of it. The following series points away from the practice of his own art:

"Denn Verse sind Erfahrungen...." (p. 25, Rilke)

"Ihr wißt nicht, was das ist, ein Dichter?...." (p. 52, Jammes)

"Ich will es jetzt noch einmal schreiben.... kneiend...."

(p. 66, Baudelaire, Bible)

Deine Musik: daß sie hätte um die Welt sein dürfen...."

(p. 94, Beethoven)

"Dein Theater enstand...." (p. 100, Ibsen)

"Es gibt Teppiche hier, Abelone, Wandteppiche...."
(p. 153, old tapestries)

This series points to art as not only the artist's but the man's experience, art not as a function, but as an experience embracing or replacing all the others: art as revelation, as a substitute for religion.

This repeated answer given to his worst despairs, the crescendo of this answer and its pride of place at the end, also contain another line of thought. To the expectation or even certainty of death he opposes the liberation by art. The theme of human nature is principally represented by the theme of death and is thus a sharply falling line. But the first volume also contains a decidedly rising line in the theme, the antidote, of human culture. To the decay of his nature, Malte's answer is the aspiration of his culture.

The second volume is altogether different. The theme of death recedes until it disappears. Does that mean that Malte's negative development toward death, is arrested by some counteraction? We have to look at the main chapters of the 'Bildungsroman' first. It consists of but three entries, and one might call them 'the case history of his fear,' 'the history of his mind,' and 'the history of his soul.'

'The case history of his fear' tries to go to the root of the feeling that dominates him. He describes the most memorable occasions when he witnessed scenes of death and had a tangible reason to feel the fear of death creep over him. There are accents in the middle of the poem which indicate that the fear of death has become the central feeling of his life; and not only the most terrible, but also a most precious feeling: "Denn ich weiß, daß sie (the thoughts he values) gerade aus der Furcht gekommen sind." (p. 196)

This 'case history' is only a résumé; the entire case is the entire *Malte*. The particular entry only tells us in what sense we are to read the entire book: the sketch book of a soul in agony.

In the middle of the second volume there is a chapter of 'Bildungsroman' in its most literal meaning (pp. 232-9). Malte tells the history of his reading, and this again becomes a résumé if his entire development. He tells how during a particular vacation he did nothing but read, determined to read every book there was. But one day he awoke from his "reading hibernation." It was then that Abelone read him a page from Bettina's "Briefwechsel . . ." She does not want to see any of Goethe's answers. And Malte makes it clear that he does not want to read literature but love; that in poetry, he does not care for art but for life. They are very curious pages. Before the tribunal of these four womanly hearts, Bettina, Abelone, Malte and Rilke, poor Goethe stands like a culprit. The literary judgments do not interest us here; the real enormity is the devaluation of art in the face of what Malte recognized as love.

As the 'history of his fear' tried to construe a hope into his fear, and as the 'history of his mind' showed that he educated only his heart, so the 'history of his soul' attempts to let grow out of his solipsism something like religion. It is the last story, that of the Prodigal Son. The parabolic biography contains not one crisis, as the Biblical legend, but one crisis after the other, down to the tardy poverty and disease, which brings the parable to the level where it is identical with Malte's situation.

But the crises are not at an end. The positive ones are to follow. Words of promise, words unheard-of in *Malte*, fall on our ear, first almost imperceptible, then unmistakable.

"....Und erst dann, erst in den Hirtenjahren, beruhigte
sich seine viele Vergangenheit.
....wie ein zögernd Genesender.

... sein Dasein, das damals die lange Liebe zu Gott begann, die stille, ziellose Arbeit.... Und diesmal hoffte er auf Erhörung.

.... In diesen Jahren gingen in ihm die großen Veränderungen vor. Er vergaß Gott beinah über der harten Arbeit, sich ihm zu nähern.

.... Ja, seine innere Fassung ging so weit, daß er beschloß, das Wichtigste von dem, was er früher nicht hatte leisten können nachzuholen."

He returned home, mature, healed, sane.

It is a dogma of Rilke interpretation that Malte perishes. It is also held that the final parable is a summary of Malte's life. One of the two statements must be wrong. If Malte perishes, then the parable cannot summarize his life, for this prodigal son — "er ist gerettet." He girates downwards, to the same point as Malte, but he obviously recovers, physically. Spiritually, he discovers his soul after his recovery, and then starts the one work of this soul, the work of more than a lifetime, the way to God.

But if we consider the second statement as true, then the first one must be changed: the parable is a parable of Malte's life, therefore Malte must be saved.

That is against all existing interpretation, against the uncontradictable one of Rilke himself, and against the well-founded opinions of several investigators. Yet, when we scrutinize the text of the second volume, we find no trace of Malte's decay. We have little to guide us. There is no further mention of Malte's sickness. All the experiences are spiritual. Few of them are actual, most are memories or readings (*Bildungserlebnisse*). Certainly most of the things he remembers or realizes are fearful, oppressive. But they seem not to crush him, although they weigh him down. He goes with bent back, under the heavy load of understanding.

Everything in the second volume seems in a state not of doom, but of suspense. Undecidedly the balance hovers between life and death. The three 'development entries' end on a positive note, most of all the 'history of his soul' by plainly telling of his recovery and his discovery that the terminus is not death but God.

Besides those three capital entries there is a secondary series of related chapters. They do not refer to Malte directly. They furnish the parallel feminine case (the development of Abelone). There are about ten such entries, and they, too, are definitely a positive development. They end (p. 289) in a smug discussion of the religious possibilities for Abelone's "later years." Malte must have become old, or Rilke hasty. But even if our delicacy be somewhat offended, our sense of the systematic ought to be satisfied For both series, the feminine and the masculine development, end alike: Abelone and God, the Prodigal Son and God.

In the first volume, Malte the artist was much emphasized. In the second volume we learn that the theme of art was only one side of the more general theme of culture. The entire feminine series is nothing

else. Of all literature, the second volume values only the love poetry by women. It is not that Rilke limits his concept of love only to love which has become poetry — then he would have an easy task in pointing out that highest love is highest culture. But he needs, so to speak, a holy writ to prove his doctrine, and thus he assembles, as a sort of sacred scripture of womanhood, those feminine prophets of his faith, whose names form a galaxy across the whole volume:

- Gaspara Stampa and Mariana Alcoforado (p. 161)
- Heloise, Alcoforado, Sappho (242)
- Eleven names, a whole literary history, on p. 274
- Clémence de Bourges, Louise Labé (276)
- Louise Labé (277)
- Sappho (278-81)

When we gather the dispersed elements of Rilke's doctrine they produce almost the effect of Hölderlin's speech ('Seepredigt') on the excursion to Athens:

"Athenische Kunst und Religion und Philosophie und Staatsform sind Blüten und Früchte des Baumes, nicht Boden und Wurzel . . . Daß die Athener so frei von gewaltsamem Einfluß aufwuchsen, das hat sie so vortrefflich gemacht."

As Hyperion there derived all development from mere Freedom (= Nature), so Malte thinks: Seek ye first the kingdom of Culture and its absoluteness, and all other things shall be added unto you. All this love-literature says one thing: have no material, even no final object, transcend yourself, cultivate your soul — and all of life, all of art, and religion also, will be added to you.

As the book of *Malte Laurids Brigge* stands, the elements of a self-education show that Rilke thought possible an evolution (of the individual and of humankind) along these lines. Otherwise the arrogant 'program' would not make sense. But if we lend to Malte's phantas-magorias the most pretentious meaning, the most far-reaching reformatory intentions, then both the 'program' and the entire book make sense. We may not be convinced that Rilke is right in any one point of his eccentric educational program. But the longer we occupy ourselves with this strange book of prose, the more are our eyes opened to the fact that its thoughts, sane or unsound, on almost every page burst into flames of a demonic, of a luciferic beauty. And if we put this and that together, the broken line of a self-education and the unbroken chain of sombre and unique poetry, the sum is nothing but an intended *Bildungsroman*, which, not for worse but for better, developed into a most splendid book of *Poèmes en prose*.

3.

No way seems to lead from the infernal abyss of *Malte* to the sunny garden of *Nachsommer*; and our eyes only can wander as far

beyond as the mountain islands of the Archipelago. In the landscaped garden we have no trouble discovering the orderly arrangement of the educational novel. In the heroic landscape we can at least find the great outlines of similar intentions. But down in the abyss our eyes refuse to see any order, any outline.

We have to take our point of view from afar, in order to gain a *quartum comparationis* for these three 'novels of education.' In a bird's eye view we may see some essential similarities. If our view embraces the whole lives of the three authors we see that the most perfect 'Erziehungsroman' of the three is the one which embodies the least of its author's development. *Hyperion*, however, is concomitant with the lonely pilgrim's progress from the Tübinger Stift to Waltershausen, to Jena and back home, to Frankfurt and Homburg. The novel is the link between the early hymns and the late hymns. In Rilke's process of maturing, *Malte* occupies even more space. If *Malte*, viewed closely, is no 'Entwicklungsroman' at all, in our bird's-eye view it is the evolution, Genesis plus Exodus, of the poet Rilke, from the early *Stundenbuch* up to the *Elegien*.¹¹

Not satisfied with so much evolution, Rilke has also pressed into the slim volume the most important moments of his previous development, of his formative years. Hölderlin and Stifter hurry over the childhood of their heros, with the determination to arrive at the age of fully attained consciousness. Rilke returns again and again to mysterious moments when, as a child, he felt some new consciousness 'accreting' to his former one. The 'Bildungsroman' is present at least in that repeatedly attempted re-vivification of childhood.

Why then does *Malte* strike us as the least evolutionary of the three books? Because *Malte* gives us his entire evolution each time, in each of the poems-in-prose. Stifter economized the modest development that takes place in his characters and spread it out over three long volumes. Hölderlin was enough of a universally gifted poet to instil some epic quality into his prose poem. Rilke was only a lyrical poet. A lyrical poem is whole and uncomplementary, whether it belongs to a cycle or not. In *Malte*, the individual poem-in-prose is complete, it contains the whole of the book in a concentration. Therefore the development is omnipresent, therefore *Malte* has not too little development but too much.

The lyrical poem does not point to a 'Fortsetzung folgt.' Hölderlin had worked himself into such a mood of epic progress that at the very end he re-opened the closed circle with a "Nächstens mehr." But in *Malte* everything is settled in each entry. The different currents released at the beginning almost neutralize one another everywhere. This is most obvious in the case of the two main currents which make up the story, the one

¹¹ Parts of *Das Buch der Bilder* and of *Das Stundenbuch* were written after that September 1902, when he had lived the first chapters of *Malte*. And the verse poem from the end of the book later finds a place among the paralipomena of the *Elegien*.

down into more and more *Verlassenheit*, the other up into more and more *Entschlossenheit*. Because they balance each other, because we see no end, we think we see no development at all.

Rilke has discarded all the simple means by which a novelist pictures progress. He lets Malte experience no new personal acquaintances, no new places. The whole story is given away in the first sentence, "So, also hierher kommen die Leute" (....um zu sterben). With that *first* sentence the hero has entered upon his *final* stage. And yet, is the solid picture-book approach of *Nachsommer* — where we have to follow minutely our cautious hero as he methodically expands the range of his travels from the first to the last chapter — so much more impressive than the less meticulous use of locale which the two poets make? We have difficulty in remembering the three well-timed raids which Heinrich makes northward and in appraising the gradation of his yearly expeditions southward. But the dynamic geography of Hyperion escapes none: the childhood on Tina, the youthful years and friendship in Smyrna, the idyll on Kalaurea, the campaign through the Peloponnesus. Nevertheless, this is all in retrospective, and at the beginning of *Hyperion* we are at the end of the story, just as in the case of *Malte*.

The similarity of the initial situation of the two non-novels becomes almost literal in a few sentences:

"Ich habe nichts, wovon ich sagen möchte, es sei mein eigen.
Fern und tot sind meine Geliebten....Ruhmlos und einsam kehr
ich zurück und wandere durch mein Vaterland, das, wie ein
Totengarten, weit umherliegt." (90)

And, on the other side, Malte:

"Und man hat niemand und nichts und fährt in der Welt
herum mit einem Koffer und mit einer Bücherkiste und eigentlich
ohne Neugierde." (23)

Yet what a difference! Not only in the elegiac tone of the one and the supercilious tone of the other. Hyperion has every cause for his haughtiness; there is no discernible reason for the disdainfulness of Malte. Hyperion could at least claim: "Ich bin voll Willens an die Arbeit gegangen, habe geblutet darüber...." "Ruhmlos," complains Hyperion; "ohne Neugierde," drawls Malte. Hyperion's is still a heroic world, Malte's is only a psychological one. Hölderlin's world is politically determined ("durch mein Vaterland"), Rilke's is indifferent space ("in der Welt herum"). Hyperion's fate is still 'erkämpft,' Malte's is only 'erfüllt.' And when we place the prosaic and well-fenced world of *Nachsommer* between the two, we are tempted to say, that one is 'erkauf't.' Hyperion has staked himself physically and spiritually, and has gained only renunciation. Malte expects the whole world for nothing, or rather, in his equation his mentality is meant to be worth the world. But in *Nachsommer* everything is at a just price, 'at cost-price,' the accounting is as pettily correct as in *Soll und Haben*.

However, if the three labels, 'erkämpft, erkauft, erfühlt,' seem exaggerations, we can withdraw them and instead characterize the 'living space' of our three heroes as 'erreist, erworben, (bloß) erlebt.' Spatially, of course, the first is dynamic, the last static; but only because in *Malte* the dynamics have turned inward, do not find outward symbols, locales.

If we equate the initial situations, *Malte* in Paris and *Hyperion* in Corinth, then it can happen that the retrospective perspective upon the whole Archipelago transfers itself, dimly, upon *Malte's* Denmark; and Ulsgaard, Urnekloster, the Residenz and the Adelsakademie emerge, like islands in the fog. Paris, to be sure, plays a more vital role than does Corinth plus Salamis. Paris is really the central plane, comparable to the Rosenhaus in *Nachsommer*.¹²

However, with Denmark and Paris we have only two main planes of the *Malte* perspective. There is a third, equally important, but without locale. (The stage for its action is indicated in the Fourth Elegy: "Wer saß nicht bang vor seines Herzens Vorhang?") The time of its action in neither past (as the experiences through the Archipelago or in Denmark) nor present (as the reflections in Corinth, or in Paris) but future. *Malte* differs from both *Hyperion* and *Nachsommer* in that it has a fully developed plane of experiences which we must ascribe to the future and which lead out of perdition. If Paris is Hell and Denmark is Purgatory, there is a plane of Paradiso too. To that plane of placeless and rather timeles insights and aspirations there belong in the first volume not much more than the entries with the "Ist es möglich . . .?", on Beethoven, on Ibsen, and on the Unicorn. In the second volume, however, this plane dominates, because it not only comprises the persistent series on loving women, but also the chapters on readings, on the fourteenth century, on the theatre, and the last three chapters, which try to obtain religion as a chemical precipitate of unsatisfied love. All these experiences are triumphs over both past and present of *Malte*; they are his future or the future of Rilke¹³: escape, survival, salvation.

The salvation, which in *Nachsommer* is so secure, because it is achieved by an unquestioned adherence to social ethics; the salvation which in *Hyperion* is so impossible, because it would have to consist in an absolute realization of political plus religious life, in a theocracy: this salvation is problematical in *Malte*, because it is so indefinite. The plane of its realization is neither political nor social, neither religious nor material. These planes do not exist for *Malte*. What exists for him, exclusively, is culture. Culture in the specific sense is the opposite of civilization. The latter is the defeat of nature by the collective efforts of men, the former the utmost development of individual (human) nature. The deprecia-

¹² Paris corresponds, in *Malte's* development, to the entire stage of the shepherd years in the legend of the Prodigal Son: "In diesen Jahren gingen in ihm die großen Veränderungen vor." (298).

¹³ The pages on Sappho, e.g. (277-81), outline the figure of a serene elderly poet, and the 'Wunschnbild' of *Malte* almost turns into the *châtelain* of Muzot.

tion of civilization is almost as patent in the pages of *Malte* as is the exclusive concern for culture.

The depreciation of civilization can be seen in the outspoken contempt for everything professional. That good-for-nothing Malte misses no opportunity to pour scorn on any one who is in any way useful, from doctors to waiters. In *Nachsommer* every profession seems almost sacrosanct, while Hyperion at least expects good at any level of society. We see in *Hyperion* the grandiose attempt to reconvert a modern civilization into an ancient culture, and the failure of the attempt. In *Nachsommer* the solution by synthesis is complete, there, culture = civilization; the stronger the individual, the more important is his social function; the professions are holy orders in the corporative hierarchy. But for snobbish Malte everything contaminated by civilization is past redemption. What he opposes to it is, on the one hand, the social background of a pseudo-nobility, on the other hand the aspiration towards a personal culture.

The autocracy of culture in *Malte* appears in the most superficial characteristics of the book. E. g., it peremptorily demands a cultured reader. Do you think Paris or Denmark are named once? The reader has to infer such things from topographical hints. Or that Beethoven, Ibsen, Goethe, la Duse, are named once? The reader is supposed to sense that the particular poem-in-prose fits no other figure. And as the reader is expected to supply the identity of these themes, so he is expected to supply for himself the connections between the different themes, and their application to Malte's situation. If to the average reader *Nachsommer* furnishes too much, *Malte* furnishes decidedly too little.

What does the culture consist of, toward which Malte educates himself and for which the book is to educate its reader? Hyperion is educated toward panentheism as a consolation, as a resignation. Drendorf is educated toward ethics as a basis of society and as a guarantee of personality. Malte educates himself toward something more intangible. It is a quasi-religious orientation like Hyperion's, but is not metaphysical, it is this-worldly. It is a quasi-ethical imperative like Drendorf's, but it is asocial. It is the cultivation of his soul's perceptiveness, the active development of the soul's passive capacity. "Ich lerne sehen . . . Ich habe ein Inneres, von dem ich nicht wußte." (p. 9) That is the first statement of the tendency. The novel does not, as is asserted, develop exclusively the sensibility for the horrible. It is much more comprehensive than that. The childhood experiences (Denmark chapters, Purgatorio chapters) develop his sensibility for the strange, the weird. Only the Paris experiences (Inferno chapters) stress the resolute assimilation of the horrible. But the experiences which we have ascribed to a timeless or future plane (Paradiso chapters) show his way to the sublime.¹⁴

¹⁴ The different temper of these stages is hinted at in the legend of the Prodigal Son. For the childhood and its sensibility for the strange etc.:

"Das Geheimnis seines noch nie gewesenen Lebens breitete sich vor ihm aus."

Stated very simply, then, the labor of culture, the cultivation of the soul, is nothing but the development of consciousness. The self-education of *Malte* and the education of the reader have this one aim, the overall sharpening of human consciousness.

The oversharpening which Rilke attempts leads to dullness. *Malte* has little educational effect. There is no great central idea or movement which would carry the reader along. The demands of *Hyperion* are at least imposing through their absoluteness; their youthful conviction has something commanding. *Der Nachsommer* actually finds many happy syntheses of modern social and individual trends. But in comparison with the absolutes of the one and the wise compromises of the other, the fine points of *Malte* strike us merely as nuances.

One category of preferences may exemplify that. All three authors worship the past, but the way they manifest this worship is strikingly different. Hölderlin succeeds in focussing his historical perspective exclusively on ancient Greece, which emerges in a supraterrestrial splendor. Stifter insistently couples Antiquity and Middle Ages, the classical and the romantic ideal. But Rilke offers neither the forceful onesidedness of Hölderlin nor the successful synthesis of Stifter. His worship of the past strikes us as eclecticism. It almost seems that he looks in history less for the feats than for the freaks. If he has any preference it goes to the baroque ages. His Denmark smacks of Struensee, if not of Hamlet. And of the millenary history of France, which loudly speaks from every streetcorner of Paris, nothing matters to him but the dusky fourteenth century, seven through the legend-loving eyes of Froissart.

The worship of the past which the three authors share is opposition to their own time, to the spirit of the nineteenth century. Hölderlin and Stifter were each conscious of a definite event, the Revolution of 1789 and the Revolution of 1848. Not so Rilke. The decade before the completion of *Malte* was more impressed by the new automobile, airship and airplane, by world expositions and scientific explorations than by political events. It is exactly these advances, inroads, of material civilization, these successes of collective effort, which are the object of Malte's rancor. Characterizing oversharply, one might say: *Hyperion* is directed against mediocrity or meso-cracy; *Nachsommer* against democracy; *Malte* against techno-cracy. But these hatreds did not become construc-

For the Paris experiences, the years of study in the laboratory of the horrible:

"Die Zeit, da sich überall an seinem Leibe Geschwüre aufschlugen wie Notaugen gegen die Schwärze der Heimsuchungen."

And for the plane of survival and salvation, the way towards the sublime:

"Gleichviel. Ich sehe mehr als ihn, ich sehe sein Dasein, das damals die lange Liebe zu Gott begann, die stille, ziellose Arbeit . . . Aus den Wurzeln seines Seins entwickelte sich die feste, überwinternde Pflanze einer fruchtbaren Freudigkeit."

There, on the last page, we find also the most explicit statement on *Malte's* entire labor of cultivation of soul:

"Er ging ganz darin auf, zu bewältigen, was sein Binnenleben ausmachte, er wollte nichts überspringen, denn er zweifelte nicht, daß in allem seine Liebe war und zunahm."

tive elements in the respective educational novels. Had each author contrived to let his hero *grow out* of mediocrity, plebeianism, industrial civilization and develop toward the respective opposite, 'kalokagathia,' nobility, spiritual culture, there would have resulted three novels of education in the full sense of the word.

But the three heroes are reacting to their respective historical moment only in a hidden way. Only with much good will are we able to see that the generation of the 'Befreiungskriege,' brought up by Romanticism, was the generation whose political idealism and disillusion Hyperion had anticipated. In a like way, the *Nachsommer* people represent what social life was felt during the time of Reaction after 1849. Skeptical of political slogans and gestures, they construct limited but solid social idylls. But Malte and Malte's generation do not build at all, do not act at all. They hold their breath. It is the calm before the European storm, the period before the demons of politics and economics broke loose, and the cycle of nineteenth century civilization turned into the pandemonium of the twentieth.

The persistent opinion that Rilke has faith in "the things" rather than in human beings, also is illuminated by our comparison. It is young Hyperion who expects much from men, from great and religious men. It is old Risach who expects much from things and from their quiet educational influence. But Malte, the precociously senile, mistrusts himself and men, things and God. He expects so little that he does not even admit disappointment: "An Enttäuschungen glaubte ich damals eigentlich schon nicht mehr; also war nichts zu befürchten." (187) That is nihilism.

The attitudes of Malte L. Brigge, whose life is one of panic, and of Heinrich Drendorf, whose life is the vegetating of a treasured species, are extremes, hyperboles. They are in the manner of medieval legends, one of life in damnation, the other of life in grace. And neither state is motivated, neither is deserved. In one, God provides the blessings of the good, in the other he keeps going the moderate hell for the evil. And in either world he does a little more, he sees to it that the good remain good and that the bad stay what they are. The two worlds are the positive and the negative states of grace. In Hyperion's world this is not yet so. There man, fresh from Paradise, still makes his gods, creates cosmogonies and dekalogues, creates his own happiness and his own torture. It is a world of young supermen, 'Heroen' in the mythological sense, not of saints or devils.

In *Hyperion* there is struggle and therefore hope. Whenever one hope is disillusioned, a new one grows, a more general (= a more modest), a more religious one.¹⁵ In *Nachsommer* there is outright optimism. It is a secular theodicy complete at least in its circumstantial evidence. In *Malte* there is dejection and despair. Unconditionally acknowledged is

¹⁵ "Daß eine neue Seligkeit dem Herzen aufgeht, wenn es aushält und die Mitternacht des Grams durchduldet." (ed. Seebaß, 288).

only evil.¹⁶ The freest praises of some 'progress' are curiously tainted with vicious qualification.¹⁷ Malte disdains optimism and does not seriously attempt to hope. He is conscious of the end, of an end that is personal and historical, individual and universal. His notebooks are an eschatology.

4.

Our three novels of self-education are failures, though magnificent failures, as novels. They are inexhaustibly rich in the accounts of many cases of individual development or education. We know that in their attempt to influence their audience none of them had a popular success. Yet the relationship of each to its epoch cannot be dismissed with that. The farther we are removed from them in time, the better we see in those works the trend of their time, not as the essential of the works, but as an accidental, not as their poetry, but as a characteristic. And in that sense *Hyperion* appears as a spring storm of the nineteenth century, when the atmosphere was full of undecided yet fertile powers, and all the horizons were filled with revolutionary wars; and *Nachsommer* as a summer calm ('Windstille' between 1849 and Sadowa), stifling but full of harvest promise, the more oppressive the more promising; and *Malte* as the November night into which fell the blizzard of 1914.¹⁸

Hyperion, *Nachsommer* and *Malte* are not only derived from the *Geistesgeschichte* of their time, they also flow into it again. Even if we deny to them all influence, we must grant them the virtue of far-sighted prognostication. In *Hyperion* are presaged not only the vaguely religious ideals of the following half century of romanticism, but also the manly, political ideals which activated the partial unification of Germany, constitutionally, without a bloody revolution, organically, with almost centennial patience. *Nachsommer* preaches the very ideals of German middle class culture in the second half of the nineteenth century, regularity and order, economy and material progress, the worship of tradition, and the respect for education as an end in itself. And even *Malte*, that epilogue to the nineteenth century, would be not entirely misnamed a prologue to the twentieth. At least it is an ominous anticipation of that rift between culture and civilization, between the individual and society, between ideals and their realization, finally of that almost complete severance of *Geistesgeschichte* from *Geschichte*, which was the Germany of the twentieth century.

¹⁶ "Die Existenz des Entsetzlichen ist in jedem Bestandteil der Luft." (90)

¹⁷ ". . . die lange Liebe zu Gott, die stille *ziellose* Arbeit. . . begriff sein an Fernen gewohntes Gefühl Gottes äußersten Abstand." (297)

¹⁸ ". . . schreien nach der Wand einer gemeinsamen Not, hinter der das Unbegreifliche Zeit hat, sich zu sammeln und anzuspannen." (*Malte*, 271)

DAMIAN, Posthumous Novel of Hermann Stehr

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"The two old folks embraced in blissful rapture. For fate, out of whose dark chamber for many months night and hopelessness had been driven through the Maechler house, had wheeled about and was pouring now from its light-shaft incomprehensible blessing upon them: and the tanner and his Christine heard in the bird-like voice of Damian the song of the future of their redeemed family." Thus Stehr ended *Die Nachkommen* (1933), clearly indicating his intention to complete the story of the Maechler family. One year later in his monograph on Stehr¹ Werner Milch discussed the central problem of this and the first Maechler novel, *Nathanael Maechler* (1929), namely that of *Gnade* and *Recht*, and pointed to its probable solution in a third novel to come. Nathanael, it will be remembered, had sought to find peace of soul and righteous living in an active life dedicated to the service of others, but had failed when the shadows of his violent youth, of his transgression with Paula Grossmann, the mountain-woman, and of his wife's sacrificial death allowed him no rest. He finally found refuge and peace in a return to the Church. Jochen, on the other hand, had determined to limit his activity and interest to the confines of his trade and family. In this mode of living he had managed to achieve a moderate success until the time of Damian's serious sickness. The second Maechler novel ends with the recovery of Damian, which is brought about not through the care of his mother and father, nor through the intercession of his grandmother to whom Jochen had turned in despair, but through the wonderful love between Damian and Sessi von Schillingkhoff.

A tantalizing sample of the third Maechler novel appeared in the March 1935 number of *Die Literatur*.² It was entitled *Damians Be-rückung aus dem neuen, unveröffentlichten Roman "Damian Maechlers Traum,"* and showed us the man Damian wrestling with a strange spirit, a spirit very much like his grandfather, Nathanael. This being seemed to be urging him on in his contemplated participation in the community affairs. We learn later when this scene is incorporated into the completed novel that it presents really the crux of the whole problem, for it places Damian before a great decision, swayed by the conflicting influences of his father Jochen, on the one hand, and his grandfather, Nathanael, on the other. As late as 1940, Wolfgang Schwarz³ still referred to it as *Damians Traum*. Stehr died in September of 1940 and for years little or nothing could be learned of the unfinished work. It finally appeared,

¹ Hermann Stehr. *Seine dichterische Welt und ihre Probleme*. Berlin.

² 37. Jahrgang. pp. 291 f.

³ In: Breslauer Neueste Nachrichten, 12. September, 1940.

however, in 1944 as *Damian, oder Das große Schermesser*⁴ and came into my hands quite by accident in August of this year. According to a notation it was edited by Dr. Wilhelm Meridies, Stehr's son-in-law, who based his work "on a comprehensive manuscript which was already ready for publication, on numerous further parts completed by Stehr, on extensive preliminary preparations and on his own notes of conversations with Stehr." The new subtitle, "The Great Razor" instead of "The Dream," shows an unmistakable shift of emphasis from the abstract-subjective to the concrete-objective, a point which will be discussed later.

The story deserves a brief recapitulation. It is divided into four parts and traces Damian Maechler's development from a sensitive dreamy boy to a man of high ideals and courageous actions. It is set in the small Silesian town of Wilkau against the background of the first World War, with the excitement of its inception, the fury of its battle-years, and the chaos of its denouement. The first part deals with Damian's boyhood. It shows him enchanted and blissful before the wonders of nature and love; it reveals him as an enthusiastic and brilliant student. He brings joy and pride to his mother, but bitter disappointment to his father, who had made a solemn pledge to his own mother to bring the boy up into the simple and honorable trade of a tanner. Damian's friendship with young Neefe, son of the mean old Inspector long hostile to the Maechlars, is an important part of his boyhood, but the guiding force of this whole period, indeed of his entire life to be, is his wonderful ideal love for Sessi von Schillingkhoff. His dream-world, however, is shattered and he is plunged into a terrible crisis when he looks upon love violated by his friend and a village girl.⁵ This part ends with Damian celebrating his graduation from the Gymnasium, just one year before the war.

Part two opens with Damian at the University of Breslau, where he soon distinguishes himself as a brilliant student in Greek philosophy and history, all of which however only broadens the breach between him and his father. He is saved from drowning one day and gains a new friend in the young lieutenant, Walther. The outbreak of war arouses a deep feeling of patriotism in Damian and he endeavors to enlist, but is rejected. His mother understands his disappointment and teaches him the old family prayer to help reconcile him to God's will. The young man experiences new life and new strength as he becomes aware of the reality of Divine Grace and of the duty of man. "Stets mein Herr und stets dein Knecht, droben Gnade, drunten Recht" becomes his maxim. Meanwhile Sessi's father, the Baron von Schillingkhoff, a dishonorably discharged general staff officer, succeeds in getting himself reinstated even though at a much lower rank, and leaves for the front. He is ingloriously wounded, a fact which Damian learns and never divulges. Out of pride he poses as a hero upon his return, only to die of a stroke at the height

⁴ Paul List Verlag. Leipzig. 480 pp.

⁵ The girl is Agnes Mosig, yet curiously when she appears later (pp. 396 ff.) the name becomes Selma Mosig.

of his tale of battle-glory. Sessi devotes all her time to the care of wounded soldiers at the town hospital. Damian wins his degree of Doctor of Philosophy with highest honors, writing on the relationship of the form of government to the happiness of the individual, and specifically in Athens in the age of Pericles. He enlists immediately thereafter and is accepted. Before leaving for the front he becomes engaged to Sessi, receiving from her her talisman, the painting he had given as a child.

At the beginning of the third part we learn of a deepening estrangement between Sessi and her mother and of Sessi's strange experience with one of the wounded soldiers in her care. His description of battle is so vivid that she faints thinking of the danger that faces Damian, and falls into his arms. Upon gaining consciousness she finds herself alone and imagines then that perhaps in the confusion of her senses some wrong may have befallen her. She writes Damian of the episode, but her letter never reaches him. Damian returns home on fatigue furlough after a year of active service, having received an advancement in rank and the Iron Cross. He tells of being buried alive at Ypres in the hurricane of fire and how he was saved by Chaplain Neefe. He recalls the time when Neefe, somewhat tipsy at their graduation celebration, had thanked him for revealing to him the baseness of his sin and had expressed his confidence that Divine Providence would grant him the opportunity some day to save Damian's life. Then Damian describes the remarkable experience he had in the moment that he faced death. Sessi appeared to him in a vision, with her arms outstretched to receive him, when suddenly a young lieutenant sprang between them, thrust Damian aside and then left them lying there. Sessi recounts her experience, how she felt that Damian was in her arms at the same moment and how in her love and anxiety she fainted. Of the soldier she mentions nothing. Damian cites this telepathic bond between them as proof that they should be permanently united. Shortly before the marriage, troubled by the vision which his reason cannot comprehend, he sets out to climb up into the Riesengebirge to gain perspective and objectivity. A new revelation of the meaning of life comes to him; the sun is the visible light of the eternal which burns within us and around which our life glows like a radiant lustre. He determines to nourish and cherish this light within him as the goal of his life. Their marriage is simple and quiet, but troubled by the refusal of Sessi's mother to attend and then by her death, probably by suicide, that very night. Once again Damian is inspired by the same message coming to him mysteriously through nature, this time in the reflected light of the planets. Sessi bears a son prematurely while Damian is away again at the front. Damian is sent to officers' training school, where he is profoundly moved by a speech of his old friend, Professor Methner. Basically the address brings the same message again, only more clearly and more forcefully. Professor Methner expresses the conviction that Germany's fate depends upon the spiritual strength of the individual.

Part four finds Damian home from the catastrophe, hardened but idealistically looking forward to an era of regeneration and peace. It takes him into the last stage of his development. He views the revolutionary conditions with alarm and deep concern. His first action is to rebuff the communist agitators by proposing a popular council to restore order and hope. With this action he becomes the center of the hereditary Maechler conflict, for his father warns him against participation in community affairs, while the spirit of his grandfather urges him to take an active role. This, of course, is the scene which previously appeared as *Damians Berückung*. He decides to heed Nathanael and so he forms the council. This act symbolically finishes his father and when Damian returns home he finds Jochen dead. He pursues his plan and succeeds in overcoming opposition, misunderstanding, and distrust, but soon he compromises his ideals in order to maintain authority and to provide for the necessities of life for the populace. Intrigue arises in the council. Damian finds himself one night on the watch for black marketeers with the same girl whom he had surprised many years before with his friend, Neefe. When she embraces him he becomes confused and excited. His old battle-fatigue and unsettled emotional condition arising from his failure to achieve perfect harmony with Sessi cause him to lose control of his senses for the moment and when he recovers he is alone and imagines he has yielded to some inexplicable impulse. He withdraws from the council, realizing he has achieved material success but failed to effect a spiritual rebirth in the community. He turns again to the study of the Age of Greece and enters into lively discussions with his friend, Walther. Through him he subscribes to a magazine which introduces him to Franz Faber in a review of his works and a picture of the man. Damian is struck by the personality of this man, reflected in his kindly meditative face. His decision to study Faber's written works must be postponed, for his family's shrinking means bring him face to face with immediate material needs. His father's hoarded cash, however, allows him to devote his time to study instead of setting out to earn a living. With the hoard, which he finds in an attic room, he discovers an account of Nathanael's speech after the victory at Koniggrätz. The exhortation of individual responsibility and heroic living bring him to the realization that he wished to achieve these very same things but has allowed the shadow of his vision and the imagined experience with the Mosig girl to cloud the light within him. He seeks to come to inner peace by meditation and study. But the sudden death of his son awakens him. After the burial both he and Sessi open their hearts to each other and, after mutual confession and pardon, are united in perfect bliss. But the newly found harmony with his wife does not effect a corresponding harmony within him. He turns again to study and finds for the first time in Aristotle and Plato the same prerequisite for the successful state, namely the inner revolution of every citizen. He is swept from this hermit-like life by the challenge of a frenzied demagogue who proclaims himself a reincarnation

of Christ, and by Franz Faber's personal rebuttal of the demagogue. Faber kindly and resolutely admonishes his listeners to turn within, to the soul, which is God. He reminds them that the kingdom of heaven is within. Man needs no salvation, hence no mediator, no church. His only duty is to bring that which is within him to expression and realization, not through fatalistic fanaticism, but by pure circumspective activity (reines, umsichtiges Wirken). With this wisdom man knows that he makes his own fate, his own state, by his thoughts and action alone. Damian sees these thoughts and words realized in the person and actions of Faber. He plunges into the study of Faber's works and introduces Sessi to them. The shadows of their deceased parents are dispersed. But the last trace of his former self is still apparent when he is about to contest a court order, effected by old Neefe, bidding him to place the family gardens, which had been ceded to Nathanael, at the disposal of the town's needy workers. The words of Faber's prayer, however, raise him again to the new stature and he drops the protest. Damian has finally achieved a sovereignty over life. This he proves by devoting himself to his preparation for service as a University Professor, by overcoming the desire to retaliate for the attempted vengeance of the old family enemy, and by voluntarily yielding the garden grounds to the poor.

Only now that we have the complete Maechler trilogy can we arrive at the full and proper understanding of the *Gnade-Recht* problem, the basic problem of the trilogy and of Stehr's *Weltanschauung* in general. Inasmuch as we are led to a new interpretation it will be necessary to review the part played by the prayer which contains the *Gnade-Recht* formula in the lives of Nathanael, Jochen, and Damian. This prayer was written, according to Stehr, for one of the Maechlers by the monk, Weiss, from Neisse, who had been converted to Protestantism (The Bohemian Brethren). Even after the family had become Catholic again the prayer continued to be cherished and was handed down through many generations. Thus it can be said that the prayer represents an expression of the basic Christian faith. The last two lines are:

Stets mein Herr und stets dein Knecht,
Droben Gnade, drunten Recht.

Nathanael keeps the prayer with him, although the hardships and misfortunes of his life have taught him that "God does not concern himself with us, and whenever we look up into the heights above the earth we always pass through clouds. What is right we human beings, we alone, must create. Then there will be grace on earth." He gives up his early attempts to erect a new order by force and violence and devotes all his energies to altruistic activity. He instills new life in the old unhappy Wennrich, brings about the repentance of the wayward Neefe, mediates a dispute between Wilkau and neighboring Scherichsdorf, settles the controversy between the town and the influential count, is

elected *Gemeindevorsteher*, checks a panic engendered by the people's hysterical fear of war, and has a new water supply system built for the town. And yet despite all this, and the subsequent acclaim of his towns-men, he has not been able to win inner tranquillity and happiness. The former rebellious spirit flares up within him, the shadow of the mountain-woman haunts him, and his wife's death torments him. He finally finds "grace" in the Church, recognizing the futility of attempting to win "grace" by "right."

Jochen reveres the prayer and, mindful of his father's great unhappiness, determines not to follow his way. He struggles against Nathanael's spirit and finally feels impelled to destroy his father's favorite garden bench, thus symbolically putting an end to his influence over him. He directs his life according to an entirely different interpretation of "right." "If each one keeps the space in front of his own house clean, the whole street will be neat. If each manages his vehicle carefully there will never be any collisions or accidents. I never succeeded in scratching anyone else when I itched." He makes every effort to keep himself aloof from other people's affairs and directs all his work and attention to gaining security for himself and his family. The prayer comes to rest in the bottom of a stocking filled with gold coins. But this "right" brings Jochen no tranquillity and no happiness, for the "great razor" of the war soon shatters his security. Jochen's concept of "grace" is somewhat confused. His struggle against the traditional family concept is hard, even in his sleep he is troubled and utters statements which seem blasphemous to his simple, pious wife. He looks upon life, like Nathanael, as a tanner; sees us all in skins which must be chamfered and tanned until one day they must be discarded; then the great razor comes over us. But in death each one of us (with or without "grace") comes up to God, or if you will, down into his deepest depth, to the human soul. Only then has he really become free."⁶

Like Nathanael and Jochen, Damian experiences the force of his parents and forbears and opposes it to work out his own life. Unlike Jochen, he conceives of "right" as active participation and assistance in the affairs of his fellow-man. Although following the example of Nathanael in this respect, he learns to emphasize more the spiritual aid and the service of council and guidance for the inner needs of his fellow-men. Where Jochen groped towards the truth, namely that we must reach up to God or down into our soul, Damian is clearly mindful of it. Jochen could only conceive of this as being possible in death, but Damian realizes it in life in as much as living man can. Towards the end of his life Nathanael finally comes to the realization that "all external happiness is only wind and danger, unless it emanate from the bond with the ineffably divine essence of man's inner being and return to it."⁷ Damian learns this early in life and so he too knows that it is "difficult and glorious to be a

⁶ *Damian*, p. 267.

⁷ *Nathanael Maechler*, p. 334.

hero in the face of death, but more difficult and more glorious to be a hero in life."⁸

For Damian "grace" is no longer "above" but inherent in his own pure, good will. He does not find peace and harmony within by one single act, but through a number of experiences which form and develop him: through the family prayer, nature, love, the words of his professor, the work on the council, the spirit of his grandfather, the study of history, and through the words and person of Franz Faber. Damian first learns the prayer when in a mood of depression and disappointment. His spirits are lifted, however, by the reassurance of "grace above," which he then interprets as Divine Providence. In this light he views his rescue and his new friendship with the rescuer as a purposeful act of God, of fate. In his eyes the force "above" is something which has influence upon the events of man's life, and not upon his inner life itself. Thus he gains composure and adjustment to life. His first awareness of the divine light within man comes to him through an experience with the wonder of nature and is inextricably bound up with his love for Sessi. Looking down from the mountain through the mist upon the many pools that glitteringly reflect the sun, he feels that he is looking into heaven's eyes, and in them he sees Sessi's. As a result of this experience he comes to believe that the sun is the visible light of the eternal which burns within us. This belief is deepened to a conviction when from out of the reflected light of the planets a voice mysteriously speaks to him, saying that man's duty is to bring the divine spark within him to a radiant flame. Once again he hears the same message, though no longer in the shadowy darkness nor in a strange voice, but in the crowded hall of officers' training school and in the well-known voice of Professor Methner. "It is not the enemy's sword that digs the grave for nations and shatters kingdoms, it is the nations themselves who destroy their states and bury themselves." "These heroes died for freedom, so, be free from all baseness of mind and heart; they fell for the might of the *Reich*, well then, be mighty in good, pure will; they shed their blood for the glory of Germany, lift yourselves to human glory. Do not always wait for the state. You yourselves are the state. You are its cause, it is your effect."⁹

Amid the unrest and chaos following the military defeat Damian sets out to form a popular council, as mentioned previously, in order to prevent violence and to establish a new society. He learns from this undertaking the difficulties involved in dealing realistically with community problems. He is sorely disappointed by the tolerant smiles and grins which greet his idealistic pronouncements on the inalienable laws of humanity. Sadly he must admit that the mass of people cannot be charged with self-responsibility, for it confuses freedom with the unhampered struggle for personal gain, and equality, which it understands not in its transcendental divine sense but worldly, with the concept of class

⁸ Ibid., p. 298.

⁹ *Damian*, pp. 366-67.

and the disfavor for the rich. From this pessimism and resultant apathy, Damian is aroused by his grandfather's words, which he finds accidentally. "Know then, that it is difficult and glorious to be a hero in the face of death. More difficult and more glorious to be a hero in life." "If there is to be light in our times, then it must be light within us, light from truthfulness, from mutual tolerance and esteem, light from helpfulness for the weak fellow-man, but also and above all, light from the earnest will to purity within us."¹⁰

Damian turns to face the imaginary shadows which have been clouding his mind and heart. His conviction as to the divine light in man and man's duty to bring it out into flame is further strengthened when in his study of Plato and Aristotle he finds it raised to universal validity. Though he had studied them before he realizes now for the first time that they too have seen that man could form the perfect state only if he built upon the dignity of his personality, a dignity which was based upon his true self, in his divine soul.

Damian now is fully aware of the goal towards which he is striving and of the means he is to employ, there is only lacking a living example, the embodiment and fruition of all that he has come to know as true and good, and this he meets in the person of Franz Faber. The scene is in a crowded hall. The townspeople have just been harrangued by a fanatic who declared that man's only possible salvation lies in the Bible and the doctrines of the Christian Church, and that the conditions of the times are responsible for his ruin. Faber arises like a "kindly father" and "venerable patriarch" and addresses them, holding all in his spell. The church, he tells them, failed in the crisis of war. Jesus of Nazareth did not seek to found a church, but to proclaim to all that the kingdom of heaven is within. The earnest men of all times knew this and heralded the divine right (*Gottesgnadentum*) of every man. The people are no longer a concern of the Church, but the Church is a concern of the people in a deeper human-divine (menschengöttlichen) sense. A paradise on earth is possible for every man who knows that he can reach the heaven which is within every moment that he speaks a right word, performs a deed that is a service to life, and thinks a truly profound thought of kindness. Man needs no redemption for he bears within him the spring of all truth, the arsenal of all knowledge, the light of all wisdom, the infinity of the universe, all the fire of the suns, all things and beings of the earth, the play of all times, the song and the beauty of eternity. All men are alike and equal in their soul. Conditions do not make the man; man makes his own fate, out of his deepest being, which is the soul, which is God. Only by the way of the soul which emanates a pure circumspective activity can man reach the new state, the new more profound democracy. Faber's wisdom guides Damian to the last stage of his development, to "the purest and freest form of life for man."¹¹ He

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 439.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 474. Cf. "Life in love is the happiest and freest form of existence",

introduces Sessi to the wonderful message of Faber's works, he allows the family enemy to have his revenge, and turns over his gardens to the poor. No longer can we speak of Damian's "dream;" for he has cut, with the "great razor" of active love, all the fetters that bound him and has made possible the advent of the new man. A period of perfect happiness and fulfillment comes to the Maechler house. Damian has finally achieved what his father and grandfather and forbears had failed to achieve, "in peace of soul to serve with a righteous life."¹² He has proven himself a "maker" (*Macher*) and no longer a wretched "potterer" (*Maechler*). In this respect the trilogy of the Maechler family may indeed be viewed as an *Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*.

To return to the prayer, it is important to note that as Damian becomes the new man the prayer itself undergoes a change. In the critical night when Damian is struggling to come to a decision whether or not to contest Neefe's attempt at vengeance, he turns as was his custom always, to the family prayer for refuge and succor. But strangely, after the first verse the words change even as they pass over his lips. The last verse is from Faber's prayer that Damian had just come to know and love. At first he is confused, but then he is moved to an immediate decision. He acquiesces in Neefe's revenge and gives his ground for the public welfare. Reference to God as the Lord (mein Herr), man as the servant (dein Knecht), Grace above (droben Gnade), and right on earth (drunten Recht), all orthodox Christian concepts, no longer find any place in Damian's prayer. Instead he is inspired by a message which emphasizes more the individual's responsibility, and the goal of eternal bliss (paradise) in this life:

"Kraft im Glücke und im Schmerz,
wache Seele, frohes Herz,
daß ich alle meine Zeit
lebe in der Ewigkeit."

Here are the essential elements of Stehr's *Weltanschauung*; his mysticism in the conviction of the incomprehensible divine soul in man, his dynamic realism expressed in "wache" and "frohes," and the blend of both in the belief in the possible realization of eternity in man's time. As a matter of fact, Faber's prayer we already know as Stehr's *Das Tischgebet meines Hauses* (1902!). Stehr's own words from the *Faustgedanken über das wahre Ich des Menschen*, the clearest and most complete formulation of his own *Weltanschauung*¹³ are spoken by Professor Methner and, as already mentioned, exert a decisive influence on Damian. Faber, who was already in *Drei Nächte* (1909) largely a re-creation of Stehr's own early life, is now identified with Stehr. His words to the assembled townspeople¹⁴ can be identified in large measure with passages from Stehr's notations in *das Stundenglas*, p. 276, and also my dissertation, *The Concept of Love in the Works of Hermann Stehr*, University of Pennsylvania, 1945.

¹² *Nathanael Maechler*, p. 23.

¹³ In: *das Stundenglas*, pp. 144 ff.

¹⁴ *Damian*, pp. 465-72.

from *Vom Christentum* (1922)¹⁵ and *Aus einer Rede, die ich im Traum gehalten habe* (1923)¹⁶; the poem which he sends to Damian under the title of *Letzte Erkenntnis* and which serves to close the Maechler trilogy, is the core, word for word, of *Der Monolog des Greises* (1919).¹⁷ The description of Faber is unmistakably that of Stehr; a Silesian, a poet-philosopher, whose face is impressive, bearded (for a great part of his life), and meditative in a kindly way, a personality that found its way to the creative declaration of its views only after a belligerent life, and whose *Weltanschauung* in the great depth of its religiosity seems curiously reminiscent of old German mysticism.¹⁸ It is most unlikely that this Faber-Stehr identity should be a device of the editor; it is in reality a natural culmination of Faber's role in *Drei Nächte* and in *der Heiligenhof*, and of Stehr's early intention to be a philosopher, an intention which he gave up only to be able to reach more of his fellow-men in the role of novelist. Stehr's own development from a bewildered, morose skepticism that bordered on the pathological (*der Graveur* — originally *Warum* — and *Meicke der Teufel*), through a violent, rebellious atheism (*der Schindelmacher* and *der begrabene Gott*) to a radiant affirmation of life, inspired and sustained by the experience of a mystical oneness of soul and God, is reflected in this man Faber. When first encountered, he is brusque and unfriendly; he is then confused and contemplative, struggling to come into the clear about his relation to his family, to the church and to God and to love. We last see him in *Drei Nächte*, breaking the bonds of family, and church, renouncing even love, setting out hopefully on his mission, which is, however, not yet clearly formulated in his mind. In *der Heiligenhof* we first meet him at night lying exhausted in the meadow, a fugitive who finds it necessary to flee into the forest to save his life. Faber is aware of his mission now and travels about Germany exhorting restless miners and workers to a spiritual regeneration, but he ends up in prison. However, at the conclusion of the novel, we learn indirectly that Faber has been influential in avoiding the outbreak of violence in many trouble spots, and we see him appearing to the despondent Sintlinger as a "king," a kindly "Menschenvater," and leading him by his wisdom and personal example towards a new life in harmony and peace with himself and in love and kindness to his fellow-men. In *Damian*, however, Faber no longer makes shadowy appearances, but strides up the aisle of the great hall and sways the multitude, changing Damian's life and helping him achieve the goal of the Maechler family.

Does this new version of the prayer mean then that Stehr rejects the Christian belief of which the Maechler prayer, as already mentioned, was an expression? Is Nathanael's way altogether false, and Damian's the only true way? That Stehr was hostile towards the Church because of his

¹⁵ *das Stundenglas*, pp. 125 ff.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 135 ff.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 301 ff.

¹⁸ *Damian*, p. 433.

early unhappy experiences with some of its representatives is well-known. That he was bitter towards Christianity because, as he saw it, it failed to prevent the tragic internecine wars of the Christian nations is undeniable. His concept of God, the incomprehensible, impersonal God that is identical with the soul-base (*Seelengrund*) of man and which can be experienced but not loved¹⁹ is foreign to Christianity. But Stehr conceives the goal of all human life to be the "eternally clear heaven within" and he recognizes that "the ways thereto are as many as there are individuals, churches, political constitutions, races, and nations."²⁰ Nathanael's way is not false, but it is a "circuitous way," for Stehr's new man does not follow the "detour over obsolete dogmas," but "knows ever more clearly, more distinctly and conclusively, that no grace can effect an assimilation of the transitory forms of his earthly existence with this his eternal being, but only his pure, good will."²¹

This is not the place to attempt an investigation of the influences which helped mould Stehr, but it can be said that Faber indicates three major sources, Christianity, German mysticism, and Eastern thought. In his address he mentions Christ, Meister Eckhart, Laotse, and Buddha specifically as those earnest men who through the ages clearly saw the truth and proclaimed it to man. These same "teachers" are cited in the *Faustgedanken*²² and in *Mein Leben*.²³ They are discussed by Freitag and Schwarz. Suffice it to say here that Faber calls more attention to Laotse than to the others.

In conclusion a few words about the style of the novel seem appropriate. The two worlds of Stehr's *Weltanschauung*, the metaphysical world, the sphere of the God-seeker, and the human world, the realm of active circumspective love, are also characteristic of Stehr's style. Boeschenstein has aptly classified them as the "seelische, übernatürliche," and the "leibliche, natürliche."²⁴ Typical of the former is Stehr's predilection throughout *Damian* for such words as *Seele*, *Wesen*, *Menschentiefe*, *Schicksal*, *Ewigkeit*, *göttliche*, *innerste*, and *unendliche*; and the transition words between the two worlds as *Traum*, *Schatten*, *Seligkeit*, and *Ergriffenheit*, in all of which it is not only the choice of words but the new conception therein which is important. Characteristic of the latter is Stehr's frequent use of technical terms from the tanner's trade and his tendency to anchor the events of the story with historical dates, places, and names, a tendency towards more and more realistic presentation already noted in the works previous to *Damian* by F. K. Richter.²⁵

¹⁹ Cf. Freitag, Karl, E.: *Hermann Stehr*. Groningen-Batavia, 1936; Schwarz, Richard: "Die Mystik Hermann Stehrs", in *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift* 1939, pp. 54-89; and Weimar: op. cit.

²⁰ *Eine Begegnung* (1928). In: *das Stundenglas*, p. 245.

²¹ *Das neue Evangelium* (1933). In: ibid., p. 165.

²² Op. cit., pp. 151 ff. ²³ Junker und Dünnhaupt Verlag, Berlin, p. 34.

²⁴ "Sprachstilistische Merkmale Hermann Stehrs." In: *Germanic Review*, Vol. 9,

1934.

²⁵ "Der vergleichende Ausdruck in Stehrs Heiligenhof." In: *Monatshefte für deutschen Unterricht*, Vol. 34, 1942.

There are also suggestions of baroque atmosphere in such exotic terms as *Gebwerk* for the legs, and the flair for antithetical compound nouns such as *Knospenahnung* and in the generous and luxuriant use of unusual or intense adjectives and verbs. "Indessen verwandelte der steigende Frühling die alte Erde in eine immer neue Wunderwelt. Die Bäume wurden zu grünen, immer dichter belaubten Fontänen, die sich in einen Himmel schleuderten, der zuzeiten so schwer blau war, dass er in seiner überträglichen Seligkeit auf den Bergen ruhen musste, um nicht auf die Erde zu sinken und die Menschen himmlisch zu begraben, denen es in unfassbarer Bedrägnis oft schwer wurde zu atmen. Jedes Blatt der Bäume schien zu singen, jedes, auch das kleinste Sträuchlein hatte seine beglückte Vogelstimme. Der lange verhaltene, zaudernde Gebirgsfrühling brach plötzlich mit einer solchen Fülle über die Erde los, dass die Wiesen kaum Raum genug aufbringen konnten, die Blumen zu fassen, die aus ihnen hervorbrachen, und Damian musste die Augen einkneifen, weil ihn sein voller Blick in eine Art bewusstlosen Rausch versetzte."²⁶ Phenomenal sounds and colors dissolve into a supra-natural music. "(Es war ihm), als fliege himmlische Musik durch die Luft der ganzen Welt . . . So fuhr Damian nicht nach Rehberg oder Wilkau, sondern in ein anderes, ein unsagbar anderes Dasein."²⁷

Even more baroque is Stehr's love-language, where the conflicting forces, spiritual and sensual, are shown side by side in sharpest contrast. "So schön fing die Liebe Reinhard Neefes zu Agnes Mosig an, denn der erste Pate des jungen Herzens ist allemal Gott selber, wenn auch der andere nächtliche Helfer mit an dem himmlischen Gericht röhrt, bei einem weniger, bei dem anderen mehr, so daß die Speise fast nie einen rein göttlichen Geschmack hat." Their first meeting was no "reines Engelslied, sondern dann und wann spürten die jungen vorwitzigen Menschen einen Hauch der Schwüle durch sich hingehen, der sie tief erschreckte und heiß beglückte, so daß sie sich in einen Zwiespalt trennten, der sie aneinander band."²⁸ Even in the love of Damian and Sessi the spiritual-sensual elements persist to a marked degree: "Sie war von einer Heimlichkeit und zugleich von einer solch himmlisch-unwirklichen Inbrunst und idealistischen Ergriffenheit, daß die beiden immerfort wie in einem Lichtrausche lebten."²⁹ However, Damian and Sessi represent an exceptional case, for they alone of all Stehr's characters are finally able to achieve a perfect harmony in their love.

One often meets arresting baroque-expressionistic descriptions such as that of Jochen's dream, when he sees before him "eine schmutzige, vollkommen leere Küste, soweit er sehen konnte, und dahinter das Meer, trübe und wenig bewegt, wie ein riesiger Latrinenabfluss des schwappend grauen Himmels, in den es sich als grauer Rauch verlor."³⁰

²⁶ pp. 82 f. ²⁹ p. 111.

²⁷ p. 81. ³⁰ p. 21.

²⁸ pp. 125 f.

Stehr is already known for the style of his introductory passages to individual chapters. In *Damian* there is an almost rhythmical alteration of reflective-philosophical and narrative-realistic passages. A fine example of the latter is the chapter opening which serves to introduce the story of Baron von Schillingkhoff into the web of the novel. It is an intense and concentrated characterization, highlighted by vivid, quick imagery well-fitted to the subject, and sustained by a suggestion of the tragedy which is to come. "Die Freiherren von Schillingkhoff stammten aus einem alten, aber armen evangelischen Geschlecht, das auf Kriegsgäulen durch die Jahrhunderte getrabt war und sich endlich dem Banner der Brandenburger verschworen hatte. Eine berserkerliche wilde Familie, die sich mit Lunten durch verrammelte Nächte leuchtete, in Lagerzelten Hochzeit hielten, am wohligsten auf Pferderücken träumte, aber eher sich an Schrotkörnern die Zähne ausbiß, als aus Feigheit oder Eigennutz etwas über die Zunge zu lassen, was wider ihre Überzeugung und Ehre war, wenn sie von dem ererbten wilden Blute nicht eben in Tollheit vollkommen erblindeten."³¹

This novel brings to an end the work of one of the most interesting figures in modern German literature. Although his first works appeared shortly before the turn of the century, Stehr was quick to cast off the stylistic idiosyncrasies of naturalism; his searching eyes penetrated beyond the pale of clinical psychoanalysis; his roots were too deep in his native soil for the lure of aesthetic cults; his mind too earnest for nebulous ecstasies; and his spirit too much awed by eternal values for nihilistic radicalism. *Damian* is the final affirmation of Stehr's belief in the divinity in man and of its unfolding in man's activity, a belief which found its fullest and most perfect expression in *der Heiligenhof*.

³¹ p. 96.



GERHART HAUPTMANN
zum Abschied

ERNST JOCKERS

*Wenn erst das Große ins Leben
tritt, dann ist alles Kleine wie
weggefegt.*

Uns war gegeben, Deinem Wort zu lauschen,
als erster Jugend Traum in uns zerbrach.
Es kam zu uns wie dunkles Quellenrauschen,
aus dem erstickter Schmerz der Tiefe sprach.

Du riebst uns nicht mit dröhrender Gebärde;
Du folgst dienend nur dem frühen Schwur:
In Deinem Liede sei das Leid der Erde,
in Deinem Wort das Weh der Kreatur.

Du kamst als Bruder, Arzt und Schicksalsweiser,
denn Du wie keiner kanntest unsre Not,
als wir, verirrt, vom langen Rufen heiser,
nicht Hilfe fanden, Rettung, noch Gebot.

Ob wir mit Gott und Welt und Weib gestritten,
ob wir, verfangen in der Einzelhaft,
mehr als uns ziemte, an uns selbst gelitten,
Du warst uns nah mit des Verstehens Kraft.

Du schaustest tief in unsre letzten Gründe,
in jeden Winkel unsrer Seelennacht,
und Du enthülltest die geheimste Sünde,
mit der wir, eitel, uns noch groß gemacht.

Da frommte kein Ausweichen und Verstecken,
kein schlaues Putzen mit erlesnem Lug:
Du sahst auch hinter Schminke noch die Flecken
und lehrtest uns der Wahrheit strengen Fug.

Und als Du dann von Lüge uns gereinigt
und freigelegt den angefressnen Kern,
da hast Du nicht zur Strafe uns gesteinigt,
denn Richten und Verdammen war Dir fern.

Da zogest Du mit Deiner großen Güte
uns an Dein liebeglühend Bruderherz
und schenktest Deines Menschtums schönste Blüte,
die edle Duldung, unsrem jungen Schmerz.

Da wuchsen wir zusammen zu dem Bunde
der Schmerzensbrüder, den Dein Wort geweihst,
und den wir hielten bis zu dieser Stunde,
weil er uns endlich von uns selbst befreit.

Nun sahn wir offnen und beschämten Blickes
das größre Leid: im ärmlichsten Gewand
die Opfer eines härteren Geschickes,
und griffen Quints und Kramers Dulderhand.

Und lernten Deiner Weber Gram verstehen
und Vockeraths und Henschels Liebesdrang,
und Heinrichs Not und Roses Mutterwehen
und Montezumas hohen Opfergang.

Dann ward uns klar, daß nur im Liebeswerben
des reinsten Mitleids echte Menschheit spricht,
und daß nur der den Gral sich wird erwerben,
der mit den Niedrigsten die Brote bricht.

So stiegen wir, von Deiner Hand geleitet,
hinab zum andern, den wir sonst verschmäht,
und fühlten uns entsühnet und geweitet,
bereit zum Opfer, wenn auch noch so spät.

Und als dann, dunkbar ob des neuen Fundes,
wir froh ergriffen unsrer Brüder Hand,
verehrten wir in Dir das Herz des Bundes
und grüßten Dich aus dem verjüngten Land.

Nun da Dein Geist im christlichen Gewande
die Heimat floh, aus der man Dich verstieß,
wer wäre kühn genug und bar der Schande,
daß er bewürfe Deiner Ehre Vlies?

Er soll es nicht! Der Treue zugeschworen,
wo wär, mit Dir zu messen sich, der Mann?
Er wäre denn aus Deinem Geist geboren,
Dann seh' er, ob er richten darf und kann.

Wir aber, umgeglüht in Deinen Feuern,
wir schützen Deines Grabes heilgen Sand.
Wir stehn zu Dir im Tod und wir erneurn
den Schwur, der uns für immer an Dich band.

Du lebst mit uns, durch uns mit Deinem Worte
in jeder Faser, jedem Tropfen Blut,
und wenn Du zögerst an der dunklen Pforte,
o, sorge nicht: es ist in guter Hut.

Wir wollen seiner mit der Treue walten,
die Dir, dem Besten Deines Volks, gebührt,
und es in Dienst und Wandel rein erhalten,
daß es wie uns auch unsre Kinder führt.



PSYCHOLOGISCH-HISTORISCHER HINTERGRUND IM DEUTSCHEN SENDUNGSBEWUSSTSEIN

RICHARD KUEHNEMUND
Princeton University

Nietzsche hat einmal den Historiker einen rückwärts gewandten Propheten genannt und den Menschen eine Brücke zwischen dem Gestern und dem Übermorgen.

Das Bedürfnis, Geschichte zu *haben* und – auf höchster Stufe – zur Geschichte zu *werden*, scheint dem ganz historisch orientierten abendländischen Menschen, der sich fast erschöpft im Grübeln über Vergangenem und Zukünftigem, tief eingeboren. Beides entspringt der ruhelosen Suche nach Dauer in der Vergänglichkeit. Dabei entspricht das Sendungsbeußtsein eines Volkes wohl dem Berufungsgefühl im Individuum, denn beide gehen letzten Endes zurück auf das Schicksalsempfinden, dieses tiefe Ringen um den letzten Sinn des Daseins.

Am Ende seines Einakters "Der Tor und der Tod" lässt Hofmannsthal den Tod meditieren:

Wie wundervoll sind diese Wesen,
Die, was nicht deutbar, dennoch deuten,
Was nie geschrieben wurde, lesen,
Verworrenes beherrschend binden
Und Wege noch im Ewig-Dunkeln finden.

Dies ganz faustische Wegesuchen im ewig Dunkeln aber ist ethische Wertung. Der Mensch ist ein Bürger zweier Welten, der natürlichen und der ethischen Welt. In der ersteren sucht er nach dem *Sein*, dem "Wie" des Lebens, und denkt in den Formen der Kausalität, von Ursache und Wirkung, Grund und Folge. Hier ist er auf immer unfrei und im Banne ewiger Naturgesetze. Im Ethischen hingegen ist er frei und Herr aller Werte. Hier fragt er nach dem *Sinn* des Seins, dem "Warum." Die Antwort auf das "Wie" gibt ihm die Wissenschaft; doch den Schlüssel zum "Warum" kann er nur im frommen Glauben und niemals im exakten Wissen finden. Und doch kann er garnicht anders als auch hier irgendwie in Zwecken zu denken, um "Sinn" zu sehen; d. h. er trägt auch ins Ethische die Formen der Kausalität und seiner eigenen Logik hinein.

Das Ich-erlebnis und Ich-beußtsein des Individuums erweitert sich mit vertiefter geistiger Reife zum Wir-beußtsein, d. h. zum Denken und Fühlen in den Formen einer überpersönlichen Gemeinschaft. Ethisch gesprochen schreitet der denkende Mensch, dieser einzige "sich wissende Geist", von Eigenliebe über Nächstenliebe zur Fernstenliebe. Ohne solchen Glauben, ohne solche Sinngebung und Hingebung, zerfiele ihm das Leben in eine bloße Reihe sinn- und zweckloser Zufälle, ein Gedanke, der dem fühlenden Menschenwesen unerträglich wäre und zum tiefsten Pessimismus führt. Kein Stoizismus hülfe ihm aus solcher Misère heraus.

Das ist denn auch die stete Gefahr des puren Rationalisten vom Schlag eines Friedrich des Großen, dem "Sa Majesté le Hasard" die Welt regiert. Heine hat diesem Typus in seiner "Harzreise" sein satyrisches Denkmal gesetzt.

Das primitive Angstgefühl des "homo homini lupus" hebt sich also auf in der Sicherheit des sittlichen Gemeinschaftsgefühls der Gruppe, der Familie, des Volkes. Im höchsten, sittlichsten Sinne verliert es sich in einem Menschheitsbewußtsein und Menschheitsgefühl im echt schiller-schen Sinne, d. h. in wahrer Humanität.

Uns interessiert hier vor allem der Begriff des Volkes als einer gefühlten und bewußt gewollten Schicksalsgemeinschaft. Obwohl sich dies Be-wußtsein meist in innerem Ringen entwickelt und in Kämpfen nach außen stählt — wir nennen seine politische Form schlechthin Nationalismus und dessen gefährlichste Betätigungsform Imperialismus — so geht das Gefühl der Schicksalsgemeinschaft dem politischen Nationalismus doch oft weit voraus. Im deutschen Falle hat es sich von früh an stark vergeistigt, da Deutschland die nationale Einigung und nationale politische Betätigung tragischerweise zu lange versagt worden sind.

Daraus folgt schon, daß sich das Sendungsbewußtsein einer Gruppe auf verschiedensten Gebieten gleichzeitig oder getrennt auswirken kann, sei es nun vorwiegend religiöser, kultureller, geistiger, politischer oder sozialer Natur.

Wenn z. B. Perikles in seiner berühmten Trauerrede ausruft: "Kurzum, ich sage, daß wir als Stadt (Staat) Hellas' Schule sind," so drückt er da, mitten im griechischen Bürgerkriege, ein Gemeinschaftsgefühl, eine Ver-pflichtung und ein Sendungsbewußtsein aus, das ethisch genommen eben-so beachtenswert wie achtunggebietend ist. Die geistigen und künstlerischen Griechen sind sich, trotz aller traurigen politischen Zerrissen-heit, ihrer geistigen Einzigkeit und Sendung in allem Elend stets bewußt geblieben.

Und so waren es die Römer auf politischem Gebiete. Eine Pax Romana bedeutete für sie nichts anderes als Menschheitswohltat und Völkerbeglückung. Ein "civis" zu sein, die römische Staatsangehörigkeit zu erlangen, war für sie eben Zivilisation, Erhebung auf die Höhen der Kultur.

Die ebenfalls stark expansive und der römischen tief artverwandte englische Sendungsidee krystallisierte sich ganz scharf in solchen Schlagworten wie "the white man's burden." Die italienische der Renaissance, wie nach ihr die französische, gipfelte im Vollbewußtsein einer als Vorbild wirkenden und stark individuell getönten kulturellen Mission: die "Ars Vivendi", das "Memento Vivere", das sich kühn dem orientalisch-christlichen Ideale der Vergeistlichung des Lebens und dem "Memento Mori" entgegenstellte. Das spätere französische, wie das früh-amerikanische Sendungsbewußtsein betätigte sich vor allem auf dem Gebiete eines stark individuell und religiös-humanitär gefärbten Gesellschafts-idealismus.

In Deutschland lagen die Dinge infolge größter historischer Schwierigkeiten viel ungünstiger und komplizierter und sind mithin auch psychologisch schwerer faßbar. Einmal wurde Deutschland viel später als die meisten westlichen Nationen zu politischer Einheit zusammengeschweißt. Eine wirkliche geistige Einheit ist es, trotz aller fanatischer Versuche der letzten 20 Jahre, und trotz Bismarck, noch nie gewesen. Stattdessen haben sich auf deutschem Boden und in der deutschen Seele die schwersten Kämpfe des Abendlandes ausgetragen. Schwerer als irgendwo hat hier nordisches Erbe mit orientalischem Christentum und dem geistig-kulturellen Erbe von Griechenland und Rom gerungen. Für den deutschen Geist ist seine eigene Geschichte ein stetes Pendelschwingen zwischen römisch-griechisch orientierten Renaissances und orientalisch-christlich orientierten Reformationen gewesen; und in diesen Kämpfen ist es nur gelegentlich zu scheinbaren Waffenstillständen zwischen den heterogenen Elementen gekommen. Der Renaissancegeist bedeutet vor allem Lebensfreude, Daseinsbejahung, Diesseitigkeit: Annäherung an das griechisch-römische Lebensideal; die Reformationen hingegen: Hang zur Jenseitigkeit, zu christlich-orientalischer Lebensflucht und Todessehnsucht. In Fausts Seele trägt sich dieser Kampf symbolisch und tief erschütternd aus.

Erst als man sich in Deutschland seine eigene germanische Form christlichen Welt- und Gottesgefühls schuf, konnte man gelegentlich auch innerlich zur Ruhe kommen. Bis man sich dieses verdeutschten, d. h. germanisierten Welt- und Religionsgefühls voll bewußt wurde und sich nun gigantisch aufzulehnen begann gegen die hinfot als ganz undeutsch empfundenen Formen des Römertums mit seinem Universalismus in Kirche und mittelalterlichem Kaiserreich.

Und damit waren auch die Themen für die Zukunft gegeben: Weg von Italien, vom Welschtum; Drang nach Norden und Osten, mit dem deutsch interpretierten Kreuz, mit Schwert, Bibel und Pflugschar. Der deutsche Ordensrittertyp mit seinem religiösen Eifer und dem Ethos heiliger Pflichterfüllung wurde auf Jahrhunderte das Ideal, und das Gefühl geistiger Sendung war erwacht.

Damit aber hatte sich der deutsche Geist dem Ideal der abendländischen Ökumene, der Verschmelzung des Germanengeistes mit Griechentum, Römertum und orientalisch gefärbtem Christentum, kühn entgegen geworfen, und der deutsche Mensch war mitten hineingestellt in diesen schweren Kampf zwischen zentralisierenden und dezentralisierenden Mächten. Autorität sollte ihm hinfot nicht mehr von aussen kommen, sondern von innen: Im Religiösen vom sittlichen Bewußtsein und Gewissen des Individuums; im Politischen von deutschen Stämmen und Fürsten.

Schon im frühen Frankenstaate liegen die Wurzeln eines religiösen germanischen Sendungsbewußtseins und drücken sich in der Lex Salica, in der groß angelegten Geschichte Gregors von Tours, wie auch im späteren "Heliand" ganz deutlich aus. Freilich, und leider, auch schon oft

ganz im Geiste intoleranter, enger Orthodoxie des auserwählten Volkes nach hebräischem Vorbild.

Die spätere ostfränkische und deutsche Geschichte hat leider alles getan, um die natürliche gesunde Entwicklung eines deutschen Nationalismus und das Gefühl gemeinsamer Aufgabe und Sendung unter den Völkern zu stören und gefährlich zu verwirren. Der eingeborene germanische Drang in die geistige und physische Weite wurde künstlich eingeengt und eingedämmt, und die großen Ziele verloren sich schließlich in erstickendem Partikularismus und in kleinlich dogmatischer Herzensenge. Gewiß, eine Menge innerer und äußerer Faktoren trugen bei zum Auseinanderbruch des vergeistlichten mittelalterlichen Kaisertums und der verstaatlichten und arg verweltlichten Kirche. Aber kein Volk litt mehr unter diesen welterschütternden Revolutionen als gerade das deutsche.

Doch was war für Deutschland die Folge? Das geistliche Amt des undeutsch kaiserlichen Verteidigers des rechten Glaubens übertrug sich nun, wenigstens im Ideellen, auf die vielen kleinen protestantischen Fürsten und Landesherren. Der lokale "Landesvater" wurde somit noch obendrein zum "summus episcopus" und zum "summus pater confessor". Damit aber verwurzelte sich die genaue Kehrseite des germanischen Drangs in die Weite, der enge und kleinstaatliche Partikularismus, noch tiefer in den deutschen Herzen. Ja, der Patrikularismus feierte nun wahre Triumphe: Hier war Autorität angestammtester Art, jedem nahe, jedem verständlich, und obendrein geistlich sanktioniert. Nur fern in romantischer Erinnerung verloren sich die Größe und der Glanz der Kaiserkrone, deren weltweite Ziele man nie recht begriffen, und für deren universale Abenteuer man so böse hatte büßen müssen an Gut und Blut und gesunder Nationalisierung. Denn die national wichtigsten, und d. h. zukunftsreichsten Momente der deutschen Geschichte hatten sich ja garnicht mittels, sondern ohne, und oft geradezu trotz des Kaisertums vollzogen. Dahin gehören der schon erwähnte Kampf gegen den Universalismus, gegen Rom, die koloniale Bewegung nach Norden und Osten, wie der Aufstieg der bürgerlichen Städtekultur und Städtebünde.

Die große Reformation des 16. Jahrhunderts und der 30 jährige Krieg brachten dann alle diese antirömischen und partikularistischen Tendenzen zu kataklysmischem Austrag. Aber in Zukunft zerfiel Deutschland nun doch in zwei geistige Lager: den vornehmlich katholischen Westen und Süden, und den protestantischen Norden; und in beiden triumphierte obendrein der politische und kirchliche Kleinstaatengeist.

So haben sich denn deutsches Denken und Fühlen infolge geschichtlicher Erfahrungen und Erinnerungen in Formen bewegt, die entweder zu groß oder zu klein waren, zu masslos oder zu eng, um zu innerer Befriedigung und zum Gefühl homogener Sendungsgemeinsamkeit zu führen. Universale Idee und provinzialer Lokalgeist standen sich jahrhundertelang unversöhnlich gegenüber, und so flüchtete sich auch das deutsche Sendungs-

gefühl vornehmlich ins Geistige, wo immer ihm überhaupt Raum gegeben war. Bis der Grenzgeist, der preußische Geist, ihm wieder eine neue Wendung zu geben begann und schließlich triumphierte, geistig-kriegerisch und in vielem tragisch mittelalterlich in einer modern werdenden Zeit. Der kämpferische Heilige Georgsgeist des „Deutschland, Deutschland über alles“ und des „Am deutschen Wesen soll die Welt genesen“ war schließlich die Folge – ein wahrhaft unerbittlich protestierender protestantischer Geist, der aber seine Wurzeln unter anderm doch auch im „Heliand“, im deutschen „Parzival“ wie in der deutschen Reformation zu suchen hat: anti-römisch, anti-klerikal, anti-französisch, und immer mehr verweltlicht. Aber der tragische innere Zwiespalt zwischen protestantischem und katholischem Deutschtum, zwischen germanisch-slavischem Grenzgeist und römisch-kolonialer Kulturerinnerung wurde auch damit längst nicht aus der Welt geschafft. Im Gegenteil, angesichts der gefährlichen Maßlosigkeit dieser in sich selbst gespaltenen Seele erhob sich schließlich die Frage: Was würde geschehen, sollte sich dieser kämpferische germanische Geist jemals des geistlich-geistigen Gewandes ganz entledigen? Würde das nicht schließlich auch den Kampf bedeuten gegen das geistig-weltliche Erbe von Griechenland und Rom?

Dies klassische Erbe hieß doch vor allem: Suche nach Wahrheit um der logischen Erkenntnis willen; wie das christlich-orientalische Erbe den Glauben bedeutete um der geistlichen Wahrheit und Gewißheit willen. In der deutschen Mystik mischten sich diese suchenden Tendenzen noch einmal in zartester Seeleninnigkeit und drängten zurück von der Welt zu ganz individualistischen Waldeinsamkeiten. Denn aus dem universal-politischen Ringen und aus der partikularistischen Herzensenge strebte dieser deutsche Geist in seiner höchsten Potenz ja doch ständig ins geistig Universale und ins Absolute, in die Sphären eines Boehme und Bach, eines Kant, eines Faust und Zarathustra.

Dem Historiker wird die Tragik der deutschen Geschichte mit dem 14. und 15. Jahrhundert besonders fühlbar. Denn von dann an wird die römisch-deutsche Idee des Universalreichs abgelöst von der französisch-englischen Idee des nationalen Staates. Doch während historische Umstände in Frankreich und England den Prozeß wachsender Nationalisierung begünstigten, stand in Deutschland einfach alles solcher gesunden Entwicklung entgegen. Und die religiösen Kriege, die auf die Reformation des 16. Jahrhunderts folgten, wurden für Deutschland zur materiellen, kulturellen und moralischen Katastrophe. Erst im 19. Jahrhundert bahnte sich in Deutschland der Prozeß inneren Ausgleichs und nationaler Konsolidierung an, der sich in England und Frankreich schon Jahrhunderte früher und fast ungehemmt vollzogen hatte. Der deutsche Liberalismus und Konstitutionalismus waren, politisch betrachtet, das Mutigste und Beste, was das 19. Jahrhundert dort hervorgebracht hat: Eine fast verächtigte Frucht; aber auch dann noch von den großen und kleinen Fürsten als gefährliche Dämagogie gebrandmarkt und verfolgt.

Gewiß, auch in Deutschland hat sich seit dem 18. Jahrhundert der

Prozeß fortschreitender Säkularisierung des Geistes vollzogen. Das religiöse Motiv verlor nach und nach an trennender Kraft, und rein politische Gesichtspunkte traten mehr und mehr in den Vordergrund. Das begünstigte natürlich die innere Einigung bis zu gewissem Grade. Aber anderseits brachte es auch neue Momente politischen Gegensatzes zu Tage. Denn die Geister schieden sich nun nicht so sehr nach religiösen wie nach gesellschaftlichen und wirtschaftlichen Glaubenssätzen.

Und dann kam die Ara der politischen Einigung und des Imperialismus moderner Prägung mit seiner internationalen Rivalität: Ein neuer Radikalismus wirtschaftlicher Expansion und politischer Hegemonie mit Weltperspektiven. Aber *hinter* diesem neuen wirtschaftspolitischen Imperialismus deutschnationaler Fassung stand auch immer noch die ältere, geistigere Form des deutschen Sendungsbewußtseins, neuer Aufgaben gewäßrig. Obwohl, wie gesagt, älter, und mit seinen Wurzeln in mittelalterlichen Tendenzen versenkt, war auch dieser Kreuzzugs- und Ordensrittergeist nun z. T. säkularisiert; wenigstens insofern als er hinfür nicht mehr das Kreuz propagierte sondern — sich selbst, seine eigene deutsche Geistigkeit und Kultur. Als dann am Ende des ersten Weltkrieges der machtpolitische Zusammenbruch Deutschlands kam, zog dieser geistige deutsche Imperialismus mit verstärktem Pathos und in neuer Rüstung zu Felde: Wenn das Schicksal Deutschland die politische und physische Ausdehnung, diesen Platz an der Sonne, versagte, so sollte doch der deutsche Geist die Welt durchdringen: Der deutsche Geist der Sauerteig der Welt; die ganze weite Welt sein Lebensraum; das neu interpretierte geistige Preußentum, siegreich in einer moralisch verfallenen Zeit.

Dies war die letzte Version des säkularisierten preußischen Protestantismus — intolerant, gefährlich, allumfassend: credo, quia absurdum. Der geistige Universalismus, der Hang zum All, verwandelte sich nun allzubald in einen degradierten, explosiven Dynamismus mit der Devise: Alles oder nichts. So ward der Heilige George zum gehörnten Siegfried, der im Drachenblut gebadet, und aus dem Born der Mütter wurden geheimnisvolle Urworte neuester Prägung geschöpft, die weder mit dem geistig kosmopolitischen, humanitären Erbe Goethes, Schillers und Kants, noch mit dem Erbe Christi in irgendwelchem Einklang standen — aber der letzte Kreuzzug begann.

Man hat oft die Doppelnatür des deutschen Geistes in der Formel Potsdam und Weimar zu erfassen versucht. Die Antithese ist freilich anziehend und symbolisch. Denn sie unterstreicht zwei wesentliche Tendenzen des deutschen Geistes: den Drang nach Organisation, Disziplin und Gehorsam einerseits, und den Hang zur individualistischen Flucht ins Transzendentale, zum Kontemplativen und Idealen. Universalismus und Partikularismus stehen sich auch da scharf gegenüber. Vielleicht ist es leider doch so, daß es dem deutschen Geiste, teils infolge widriger historischer Erfahrungen, teils aber auch infolge gefährlicher Veranlagungen, an der Kraft der Synthese gefehlt hat, den Ausgleich aller jener

Gegensätze in sich selbst dauernd zu erlangen; und so sind auch ihm Charakter und widriges Geschick zum Schicksal geworden. Hin und hergeworfen zwischen Universalismus und Partikularismus, dem zu Engen und dem zu Weiten; dazu in sich selbst Byronisch-Faustisch gespalten; und mit dem gefährlichen Hang zum mystisch Übersinnlichen tief in der Seele, hat dieser tragische deutsche Geist nur ganz selten die Synthese aller seiner Gegensätze, und damit die eigene innere Form gefunden und sich selbst und seine Sendung in der Welt klar erkannt.

Eine wahre geistige Einigung und Erneuerung kann aber, so scheint es, auch in Zukunft nur ausgehen von der Kantisch-Goethischen Lebenssynthese, in der das Ringen des germanischen Geistes mit dem christlich-orientalischen Erbe einerseits, und dem griechisch-römischen Erbe anderseits, in Kant theoretisch und in Goethe praktisch, zu harmonischem Ausgleich gekommen ist.

Das heißt aber auch, daß die Sendung des deutschen Geistes, nach Veranlagung und Geschichte, obwohl auf völkischer Grundlage, nur geistig humarer Natur sein kann und dort wieder anknüpfen muß, wohin vor etwa 150 Jahren die große deutsche Klassik der Welt schon einmal in einzigartiger Größe und Klarheit den Weg gewiesen.

NEWS and NOTES

WILHELM SCHÄFER

Ein Brief von dem auch hier in unserm Lande weit bekannten deutschen Schriftsteller Wilhelm Schäfer, gerichtet an Professor G. H. Danton, Union College, dürfte von Interesse für unsere Leser sein.

Sehr geehrter Herr,

Sie haben im Jahre 1935 die schöne Schulausgabe meiner Rheinsagen herausgebracht und mich und mein Werk in einer umfänglichen Einleitung geehrt. So wird Sie vielleicht mein Schicksal interessieren, wie es der Krieg über mich brachte. Als er sein für uns Deutsche grausames Ende fand, waren die Vorräte meiner Bücher in Leipzig und München nacheinander ziemlich restlos „verbombt“. Im deutschen Buchhandel bin ich infolgedessen so gut wie nicht mehr vorhanden. Neu gedruckt kann nichts werden, weil mein Verlag (Langen-Müller in München) nun schon seit fünf Vierteljahren beschlagnahmt ist. Auf diese Weise bin ich meinem Volk nur noch zugänglich, soweit private und öffentliche Bibliotheken meine Bücher noch besitzen. – Daß es zu meinen Lebzeiten nicht mehr zu einer Gesamtausgabe meiner Werke kommen wird, wie sie vorbereitet war, damit habe ich mich abgefunden; daß ich aber vollständig

ausgeschaltet bin, dies trifft mich in meinem 79. Lebensjahr hart, da die Geduld schon vor der Tür des Todes steht.

Sie haben in Ihrer Einleitung dargelegt, daß meine deutsche Haltung volkstümlich, nicht völkisch begründet sei. Dem entsprechend war ich natürlich nicht in der Partei, so schwer es mir gemacht wurde, meine Unabhängigkeit durchzuhalten. Es ist also nicht meinetwegen, daß mein Verlag beschlagnahmt ist, sondern weil er vor einigen Jahren vom Eher-Verlag erworben worden war: sehr gegen meinen Willen und meine vergebliche Wehr. So muß ich etwas büßen, was nicht meine Schuld ist.

Gerade die amerikanische Militär-Verwaltung hat kürzlich einen kulturellen Austausch proklamiert. Der darin betonten Wichtigkeit des geistigen und künstlerischen Lebens entspricht es nicht, daß ein Dichter von meinem Rang durch eine Maßnahme ausgeschaltet wird, wie es die Beschlagnahme des Langen-Müller Verlags — nun schon im zweiten Jahre — tut.

Mit vorzüglicher Hochachtung

Ihr ergebener

Dr. Wilhelm Schäfer

Change in Subscription Price

The publishers of the *Monatshefte* announce that, beginning with the 1947 volume, the annual subscription price will be \$3.00 in the United States and \$3.50 on foreign subscriptions. Single copies will be \$0.50.

We regret that a sharp rise in the cost of production makes this increase necessary. Since the foundation of the *Monatshefte* in December 1899 the price to subscribers has remained the same while expenditures for publication, especially during the last few years, have increased very substantially.

We are sure that our subscribers will understand the situation that confronts us and will remain loyal to their magazine, the *Monatshefte*.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Moderne deutsche Erzähler,
ed. by Robert O. Röseler, revised edition
(Norton, 1946).

Good selections of contemporary material which could replace or complement the time-honored American class room classics, should be very welcome. The authors of the stories, presented in this volume, were all born in the 'eighties of the last century. They are Wilhelm Schmidtbonn with an anecdotal story of the good quiet calendar fashion, Carl Busse, Leonhard Frank with the fresh and unsentimental beginning of his novel *Von drei Millionen drei*, probably the best selection in the book, Richard Hohlbaum with a moralizing Strauss anecdote, Ernst Wiechert with a sea story (which replaces *Radetzkymarsch* of the earlier edition), and Bruno Frank with his longer character study *Bigram*. It is quite evident that Röseler's concern in selecting these stories was not only that of introducing a variety of modern texts, but that he strove for a concerted variety, which he achieves by a thematic unity. We see strong unconventional characters who live by self-made laws, in conflict with external ties, but in harmony with their own manly qualities. This main theme should be of special interest to our students. A short biographical and literary note about the author precedes each story. The explanation of idiomatic expressions and difficult phrases, at the bottom of each page, have been increased. A complete vocabulary is designed to give appropriate help to beginners. Except for *Bigram*, which is more complex than the rest, these stories are written in simple and direct language. This reader, therefore, can be recommended as a useful and stimulating text for second or third semester, with the Bruno Frank story leading into more advanced reading.

—Werner Vortriede
Princeton University.

Der Engel mit der Posaune.
Ein Roman. Ernst Lothar. Schoenhof
Verlag, Cambridge, Mass.

Es war längst notwendig, ein solches Buch zu schreiben, um der Welt zu beweisen, daß Wien und Österreich mehr

als Gemütlichkeit, Heuriger und Donauwalzer bedeuten. Lothar zeigt klar, daß Wien das Herz Europas und Österreich der Nerv der Völker ist. Mit Liebe und Realistik schildert der Wiener Dichter jenes Wien und Österreich, das der Welt so ungeheuer viel an künstlerischen Werten gegeben hat und von der Welt trotzdem so wenig gekannt ist.

Die Familienschicksale von drei Generationen stürmen an unserm inneren Blick vorbei. Seit 150 Jahren hat Wien keinen ruhigen Augenblick erlebt, sondern vielmehr mit Dynastien, Diktatoren, Fanatikern und Courtisanen gekämpft. Fremde Tyrannen und heimische Schädlinge, machthungrige Philister und selbstsüchtige Frauen kommen und schwinden, Wien aber bleibt. Österreich ist unsterblich. Sein Genie, der Geist seiner Kultur, der Klang seiner Musik und Poesie und der Reiz seiner Landschaft sind unzerstörbar.

Und was verschafft diesem österreichischen Wien den endgültigen Sieg? Es ist die geistige Anmut seiner Bewohner, die Beethoven, Mozart und Grillparzer bezauberten. Es ist jene leichte und doch tief wurzelnde Grazie im Wiener Leben, das diese Menschen zu Schöpfern und Wahrern einer Kultur gemacht hat, die weder die Türken noch Napoleon oder Hitler verändern konnten. Gibt es einen stärkeren Beweis seiner Lebenskraft?

Über dieses Wien lächelt aber nicht immer die Sonne des Glücks, und die Donau ist nicht immer sanft und blau. Laster, Reichtum und Prunksucht feiern oft in der alten Kaiserstadt ihre frechen Orgien. Mit der Exaktheit des sezierenden Arztes und der Sehkraft des Dichters entblößt hier Lothar die scheinbar hoffnungslose Verderbtheit, die geistötende Tradition und das mörderische Vorurteil. Aber trotz allem leben und sterben diese Menschen mit echt österreichischer Grazie. Sie lassen junge Helden zurück, welche die österreichische Idee der Duldsamkeit und Menschenwürde auf ihrem Banner tragen und zu neuem Glanze erheben. Zu neuen Ufern lockt ein neuer Tag. Und deshalb sollte jeder Freund Österreichs und seiner unsterblichen Kultur dieses Buch lesen.

—F. C. Neumann
Elizabethtown College.

Goethe's Botany. *The Metamorphosis of Plants and Tobler's Ode to Nature, Agnes Arber, D.Sc., F.R.S. With an Introduction and Translations. (Chronica Botanica, Waltham, Mass. and G. E. Stechert, New York 1946. \$2.00.)*

It is great good fortune that a botanist of the rank of Dr. Arber one of the foremost living morphologists and possibly the most subtle of them all, should have also become interested in the history of botany, to which she contributed an excellent work on *Herbals* (Cambridge University Press, 1938), and that she should finally be so richly equipped with literary tact and taste as well as with a unique feeling for language, and particularly Goethe's language, that she could undertake this essay and translation. Her Introduction is, in my opinion, the best piece ever written about Goethe as a scientist. The great value of the book is its combination of modern botanical knowledge with an understanding of Goethe's mode of study and an appreciation of the historical dimension. This should make the book important also for other scientists. The typography and illustrations are excellent and the book will, no doubt, help many a student find an approach to Goethe the scientist.

Goethe's position in the history of science is not at all settled, largely because the successful scientist of our age is not equipped with sufficient linguistic and historical knowledge to appreciate the contributions of a hundred and fifty years ago in the light of their day. The morphologist is in the happy position of the Sanskritist in philology, he is not much under the pressure of outside demands; he can look about and review his position, he can trace the history of his specialty without missing out on the latest contributions; he can also see the relativity of modern progress more easily than one thoroughly wrapped up in the scientific fashion of the day.

It would be interesting to know how far innate botanical objectivity and interest in concrete facts as well as in rampant general conclusions, and how far Goethe's predecessorship prompted Dr. Arber to emphasize the part of the leaf when he was called upon to do the work on *Monocotyledons* (Cambridge University Press, 1925). In its first chapter, she briefly reviews the fate of morphology in the light of 19th century biological thought. In that masterwork, as well as in *The Gramineae* (Cambridge Univer-

sity Press, 1934), she discusses Goethe's contribution to morphology with loving respect.

Making a life's work of morphological research, she was, of course, also able to see Goethe's limitations, for example, his neglect of the root. Thus she always stood in the fertile relationship of a critical continuator of Goethe's beginning. Knowing both morphology and Goethe she could redraw the strong lines of Goethe's thought in her own system of coordinates with inevitable benefits also to the understanding of Goethe's mode of thinking. Hence it is slightly amusing that she should attribute to Goethe an "intense interest in psychology", when Goethe was hardly ever able to accept other views objectively. He always had to make a decision, which often, especially in later years, locked him out from the finer thoughts of others. But even this amazing narrowness of Goethe's rich creative mind is otherwise excellently developed by Dr. Arber.

It so happened that Goethe research during the last hundred years was paralleled by an overemphasis on evolutionary concepts, which were even more strongly accented by the rediscovery of Mendel's statistical laws of genetic behavior. Since Goethe cannot be said to have made any major contribution in this line, notwithstanding his studies on comparative anatomy, Goethe could be said by the scientists of the last hundred years to have made no contributions to biology; for biology seemed almost identical with the evolutionary outlook. In its light, the Metamorphosis concept of Goethe was popularly misinterpreted.

The average scientist, called upon to make his contribution to a centennial celebration, could not be expected to investigate what Goethe meant in 1790, what the language of 1790 means in the language of 1932 or 1949. The Goethe scholar cannot be expected to be versed in the science of the late 18th century and in concepts which were common knowledge to Goethe, let alone to devote years of research to the botany, anatomy, geology, microbiology, climatology, and physics of that period. It is therefore not surprising that no one has tackled the whole question adequately. Very few could. To the scientist of today, forced as he is to specialize and to work in a line that happens to be in the foreground of research generally, the contributions of harmonious old masters,

who followed their own inclinations independently, become more and more hazy and a matter of information gleaned from secondary sources or even more weakly trickling tributaries. A "major problem" is really a problem that is being generally worked upon, whatever its systematic significance. Tulips, for instance, have been grown and watched for several hundred years, but their genetic behavior is as much as unknown, largely because it would require a man's full life of continued observation. The acidity of soils is of foremost practical importance for agriculture, yet nobody has investigated the pH relationships of different plant species and varieties on given soils in given seasons. Nothing is therefore predictable, no principles are known. On the other hand, before the arrival of modern specialization and the invention of finer and finer methods, the emphasis was necessarily more on principles and programs, yet to be tested. The most interesting approach to Goethe's personality is therefore by way of his scientific opinions, because there he had to strike a balance between facts and hypotheses. The complexity of the problem is enormous and will be more fully developed if we can ever resume our work on the science of Goethe's day. Dr. Arber was not interested in these more far-reaching questions of Goethe research, but she contributed to their solution considerably.

Goethe's *Urpflanze* is a concept that shows eminently the tendency just mentioned, the emphasis on a program, the statement of a principle; at the same time, as Dr. Arber points out, its emphasis on the leaf is a step forward in concrete science. While the expansion and contraction theory is not intelligible merely on the basis of Goethe's botanical work, it finds its application here in an attempted combination of morphological and physiological ideas. Dr. Arber's way of introducing the *type* concept is quite appropriate, though a minor criticism will presently be voiced. The *Fragment* of Tobler could be more fully explained in connection with those youth movement concepts of the early Weimar days which culminated in geological and cosmological works, of which Herder's are much better known than Goethe's minor contributions, though he brought some to ultimate fruition in his later novels.

In our day it often seems as though morphology and genetics were beginning

to merge on the cytologist's slide and in the ecological experiment; genetics and physiology have made contact only within the last decade; while morphology and physiology have long touched each other in such works as those of Klebs and the Russian school, for instance, of Krenke, whose *Wundkompensation, Transplantation und Chimaeren bei Pflanzen* (Berlin 1933) discusses abnormal formations as parts of natural growth and even development much as Goethe had begun to observe them. Thus, much that might have seemed infertile fifty years ago, a mere whim of a poet dabbling in natural history, has since come into proper focus. All of these matters are outside the scope of the book under review. So is paleobotany, which interested Goethe the geologist and friend of Count Sternberg. Microbiology, which had been much furthered by Gleichen-Rußwurm, stimulated him even to extended experiments. As previously pointed out, he discovered first antibiotic effects (*Boletus* and *Piper*), a matter that happens to be in the foreground of scientific interest right now.

That one man, the author of *Faust* and *Hermann und Dorothea*, should have embodied in himself such infinite creative powers that every discipline he approached bears traces of his mind, is and remains in the last analysis the real *Urphænomen*. I mention this word deliberately, because I mean to show that *Ur-* is, and was felt by Goethe to be, a more mystic prefix than any translation will ever show. This is not Dr. Arber's fault; it is merely due to the fact that England did not have Goethe to form the English language as he formed German.

The translation is excellent, indeed. It preserves the tone of the original without resorting to archaic trickery and also without ever becoming difficult for the modern reader. The student of Goethe will find it particularly valuable in this country as it renders the science of the 18th century and Goethe's thought more lucid and live through the medium of the familiar English, just as Shakespeare became alive through Schlegel, as he appeared then in the language of the classics rather than in the idiom of Aegidius. We hope therefore that, through Dr. Arber, at least the *Metamorphosenlehre* may become better known in this country than it has been abroad.

Heinrich Meyer

Erinnerungen an Hofmannsthal und Briefe des Dichters,
Carl Burckhardt. Verlag Benno Schwabe und Co., Klosterberg, Basel, 1943. Sfr. \$3.25.

The image of a poet's personality and work reflected by the mirror of a sensitive and cultured friend may serve as an opening clue to our insight into the inner form of both the poetry and the poet. Such is the achievement of the small book in which Carl Burckhardt has published letters received from Hugo von Hofmannsthal from 1919 to 1929 and his own recollection and interpretation of his close and sustained relationship to the poet. The author of this book is a man of letters, a historian of rank, and a prose-writer of poetical distinction. A Swiss diplomat, he has gained experience in world affairs and, for some years, has held the office of High Commissioner of the League of Nations at the Free City of Danzig. Besides a rare kinship of a very personal nature, he has in common with Hofmannsthal a genuine concern about both the life of the mind and the political destiny of the modern world. He is a European deeply attached to the invaluable heritage of civilization which is threatened in our age.

It is upon incidents or statements learned through the years, that this thoughtful observer builds his view of Hofmannsthal's inner actions and reactions. The poised and attentive refinement of his study impresses one by its depth and its aliveness. Only a witness who was sincerely sympathetic and at the same time a man of mature culture could have presented such an image, being able to combine the distance of the historian with the devotion of the friend.

Inevitably this testimony leads the reader far through the wide and manifold world of Hofmannsthal's inner experience and literary creation. It introduces us to his ways of living, from the atmosphere of his home and his habits of working to his responsive relationship to nature and to the free communion of his mind with the historical masters of thought. It illustrates the significance of the urbane tradition of imperial Austria to the poet and also his congenial and viril understanding of the people and their function in the human community. The book tells of Hofmannsthal's love and criticism of things German, of his reaction to other nationalities and styles of society. It re-states the extent to which he took part mentally in past and

present history by describing his extraordinary capacity to feel the ethos of past epochs "from the inside," and by speaking of his premonitions in regard to our own age. It relates some of his contacts with contemporary literature and thought, both domestic and foreign, and touches upon his attitude toward some of his own works, such as *Der Schwierige*, *Arabella*, *Andreas*, extending this account in connection with the drama *Der Turm*. The letters supplement the two volumes published from the documents of an earlier period and the exchange of letters between Hofmannsthal and Stefan George. Some of the statements quoted are akin to those found in Hofmannsthal's *Buch der Freunde*.

Carl Burckhardt's meaningful design makes visible the contours of a character who was deeply aware of the contemporary catastrophes, but who reacted to them by strengthening his responsible service to the mission of the poet. Against a somber background there comes into evidence the inner freedom which enables men to continue living and working, faithful to lasting standards. Moreover, the ineffable charm of the poet's personality emerges from Burckhardt's tribute to Hofmannsthal's friendship. The book may last as a document of a rich and courageous life testifying to the surviving strength of Western civilization.

Arnold Bergstraesser
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Geschichten von heute und gestern,
Hermynia zur Mühlen. Stories for Oral Discussion, edited by William R. Gaede and Flora Buck Klug of the Department of German, Brooklyn College. Henry Holt and Co., 1946.

On rare occasions a reviewer has the privilege of commenting on a text book adapted with consummate skill to the specific needs of American students. The reading matter offered here includes ten short stories by the Austrian writer Hermynia zur Mühlen, while the pedagogical material comprises a more than usually complete vocabulary and sections on grammar and word study together with an abundance of exercises.

The stories were selected by the editors for their adaptability to conversational practice in the classroom. They are reprinted without changes in their original straight-forward style and in language that would be called simple by the native reader but should offer its goodly share of difficulties to our second

year college and fourth or fifth term high school students. The subjects touched upon are taken from everyday life, chiefly in Austrian surroundings, and should not only awaken interest in questions of general European culture, but also give good practice in dealing with useful and frequent vocabulary and syntax. There is a generous allotment of quiet humor, a bit of whimsy, some plain tragedy, and even a bit of downright sentimentality, with a moralistic turn. But perhaps the main virtue of this selection of stories is the fact that it assumes a certain amount of maturity on the part of the student instead of talking down to him or making him feel like a child, as so many of our more traditional readers tend to do.

The exercises make full use of the adaptability of the reading matter to conversational practice. Two sets of them are provided: One, at the back of the book, runs the gamut of grammatical variations based on the subject matter of the stories. The other set is distributed among individual lessons on grammar and word-study following each of the first eight reading selections. The topics covered include: participles as adjectives; subjunctive mood; passive voice; dative and accusative objects with verbs; verb prefixes; modal auxiliaries; adjectives, participles and infinitives as substantives; indefinite pronouns; sentence structure. The explanations, though concise and showing commendable restraint, are given in the traditional technical jargon and can therefore be used only with students who have already been initiated into its mysteries. Specific drills are provided in each grammatical section. The inclusion of exercise material with the various details of word-study is an especially praiseworthy feature, for to the best of this reviewer's knowledge such matters were hitherto regarded as mere frills to be appended to lessons almost as if they amounted to nothing more than curios for the student's passing attention. No exercises accompany the last two stories, since these are meant for rapid reading only.

The vocabulary more than any other part of the book reveals the hand of the experienced pedagogue. It is marked by two characteristics that deserve to be greeted with hearty enthusiasm. First, it is preceded by a thorough explanation for the student of the often apparently occult principles of vocabulary arrangement, and second, words occurring in unusual or idiomatic meanings are listed

with *page and line references*, a fact that makes it certain that this glossary was compiled with infinitely greater accuracy than can be achieved by the more popular method of arbitrarily copying meanings out of the nearest handy dictionary. Possibly a few errors of omission crept in during this exacting task, yet that does not in any way invalidate the essential reliability of the vocabulary as it stands. (E. g. *indem* first appears meaning *by* on 18:22 rather than 20:11.)

Somewhat surprising, in view of the rather advanced level of the reading matter, but none the less welcome, is the practice of entering each verb-form in its alphabetical order instead of merely listing the infinitive. (For subjunctive forms the Prokosch terminology is used).

A similar concession to more elementary levels is made in the footnotes which appear on almost every page. Generally speaking, the principle is followed of translating at the bottom of the page such difficulties as have not yet been touched upon by the grammatical review chapters. Thus all subjunctives are furnished with English equivalents in the first story, but after these forms have been discussed in the grammar section that follows, the student is expected to get along without further aid as regards this topic.

In spite of the obvious care with which this textbook was prepared, it is sometimes difficult to detect the criterion by which it was decided in specific cases whether to provide a footnote or to let the student consult the vocabulary. Thus one wonders what consideration led to the furnishing of footnotes for *Was suchst du hier?* (1:5) . . . *Eine frühere Hausangestellte von mir* (7:1), and *Niemand darf dort hinein* (45:26), while none are given for *Schau, daß du weiterkommst!* (1:5) (no special entry under *weiterkommen* in vocabulary), *Ich mußte zur Polizei* (6:82) (same principle as in 45:26 above), *Wir haben nimmer ein noch aus gewußt* (70:4) (if a student knows the meaning of *gewußt*, will he think of looking it up to get the meaning of the idiom?) and *wo von . . . die Rede ist* (74:2) (not explained under *Rede*).

In preparing this review, no special effort was made to pounce upon every misprint, but the general impression was gathered that they are practically nonexistent. The only one specifically noted was *Konversationslerikon* (32:8).

As a closing word, may it be clearly

stated that within the limits intended by its editors, it should be possible to use this text with full confidence of success.

George E. Condoyannis

Ernst Jünger,

Karl O. Paetel. Verlag Friedrich Krause, New York, 1946.

Neue deutsche Gedichte,

ausgewählt von Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt. Verlag Friedrich Krause, New York, 1946.

Soeben erschien in dem Verlag Friedrich Krause, New York, der zweite und dritte Band der Schriftenreihe „Dokumente des anderen Deutschland“. Die Reihe, die mit der Herausgabe von „Goerdelers politisches Testament“ begann (Bespr. in *Monatshefte*, No. 2 dieses Jahrgangs), macht es sich zur Aufgabe, Äußerungen der Gegner des Nationalsozialismus zur Zeit der Naziherrschaft in Deutschland zum Abdruck zu bringen. Es ist zu begrüßen, daß sich hier in unserm Lande ein Verleger gefunden hat, der in einer Reihe von Veröffentlichungen Beweise zu erbringen sucht, daß allem Grauen zum Trotz, in Deutschland Stimmen laut gewesen sind, die Gegner des Nationalsozialismus gewesen sind und sich der Bewegung nicht anschlossen.

Paetel schildert in seinem Bändchen „Ernst Jünger“ den Werdegang und die Persönlichkeit des Schriftstellers Ernst Jünger, den der Verfasser persönlich gekannt hat und der in den Augen Paetels eine der bedeutendsten Erscheinungen auf dem Gebiete der deutschen Gegenwartsliteratur ist. Jünger war Nationalist und ein heftiger Gegner der Republik von Weimar, der aber nicht Nationalsozialist wurde, weil er sich den Sieg des deutschen Nationalismus wohl anders vorstellte, als er im Nationalsozialismus zum Ausdruck kam. Im Jahre 1939, als der zweite Weltkrieg ausbrach, veröffentlichte Jünger sein Buch „Auf den Marmorklippen“ eine Allegorie gegen die Hitlerpartei und die Hitlerherrschaft. In einem zweiten Werke „Gärten und Straßen“ kommt deutlich und stark Jüngers passive Opposition gegen den zweiten Weltkrieg zum Ausdruck.

In einer höchst interessanten Einleitung schildert Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt in seiner Gedichtsammlung „Neue deutsche Gedichte“, wie er unmittelbar nach dem Einmarsch der alliierten Truppen in Deutschland versucht hat, heimliche antinationalsozialistische Dichtung aus den Schreckensjahren der Naziherrschaft in Deutschland aufzufinden. Das Ergebnis

seiner Bemühungen finden wir in dem vorliegenden Bändchen abgedruckt. Den Kern des Bändchens bildet eines Auswahl aus dem Zyklus „Jetzt ist des Heiligen Zeit“ von Reinhold Schneider. Schneider ist ein begabter, ringender Dichter. Seine Gedanken, die er in die kühl-klassische Form der Sonette und ineinanderübergehende Sonette zwingt, sind voll von geschichtlicher (Kaiser und Papst) und abstrakter Symbolik (Das Opfer, Der Retter), deren aufrührerischer Protest gegen das herrschende Regime sich erst nach wiederholtem Lesen erschließt. Von anderem Charakter sind die Gedichte von Helga Grimm. Es sind Dokumente des persönlichen Erlebens, entstanden als unmittelbare Antwort eines fühlenden Menschen auf die grausame Brutalität der täglichen Ereignisse—Tagebuchblätter in der Form von Gedichten, in denen aufrichtiges Mitleid und starke Erpörung über die Vergewaltigung schuldloser Opfer zum Ausdruck kommt. Man kann nur wünschen, daß diese beiden Bändchen als Dokumente der Zeit einen weiten Leserkreis finden mögen.

R. O. R.

Fritz von Unruh,

a monograph by Dr. Alvin Kronacher, with an introduction by Professor Albert Einstein. Rudolf Schick Publishing Company, New York. Price, \$2.50.

It is the purpose of Dr. Kronacher's monograph to make Unruh — his life and his work — better known to the American reading public. The noted lecturer on theater and stage not only analyzes Unruh's dramatic and poetic creations giving them their due place in the front rank of the literature of the twentieth century, he also evaluates their importance in the author's lifelong struggle — desperate and lonely at times, but always courageous and uncompromising — against the spirit of evil incarnate in the horrors of war, in militarism, imperialism, fascism, etc., which prevent man in our confused age from being what he was meant to be: an individual and a personality alive and at work for the good of society and mankind.

In his portrayal of Unruh as a writer and man, Kronacher draws liberally on the testimony of outstanding leaders of European humanism. Men like Romain Rolland, Stefan Zweig, and Thomas Mann join Professor Einstein and the author of this monograph in expressing their faith in Unruh's human and literary leadership — their faith and admiration for a

man who, since the beginning of his public career back in 1911, has carried on the fight for the good cause and who stands before us today as one of the few leaders in the realm of letters.

R. O. R.

Die Umgangssprache,
Erich Funke. *An introduction to spoken German*, (Crofts, 1945).

The difference between colloquial and written language is much less pronounced in German than it is in English. Most books of conversational German fail to recognize this fact, and start, therefore, on a wrong assumption. To make their German "conversational" most text book writers use a mixture of jargons, mostly annoyingly jocose (*burschikos*), which is neither spoken by the educated nor the uneducated people, but only by the eternally "funny" half-educated ones who would like to speak e. g. like a *Corpsstudent* or an inveterate sportsman. Then, to judge from all these books that have come out of the oral method of the Army Training Program, someone in Germany is expected to go on a wild rush from one store, hotel, taxi etc. to another. The student learns all kinds of expressions to deal with the ensuing situations, but he will never learn what the title of the book promised: how to conduct a real and sensible conversation as grown-up people are prone to do. Usually the humor is enhanced by a handful of stale deplorable anecdotes.

Erich Funke's text book is no exception to the rule. But in spite of it the book contains a more than usual amount of often useful material. Twenty-five lessons of conversations with the English text next to it (R. O. Röseler's method, in his *Say it in German*, of printing the translation on the following page seems methodologically more felicitous). Each lesson closes with *Beschreibungen* in German, which use the same contents as the conversations. Another section presents themes for conversations with lists of useful words. The exercises which follow are especially varied. A short grammar, the anecdotes, a few poems and a vocabulary make up the rest.

While this type of book still does not seem to be able to replace the more conventional type in which language is treated as expressing thought and not only as a matter of expediency, as a complementary class room help it should be welcome. As to the text itself some of the various suggestions that came to

mind may be mentioned: *Goethestrasse* (not *Goethe-Strasse*); even in the German usage of titles, the direct address of *Frau Rechtsanwalt* is nothing but funny; *waschen Sie mir bitte das Haar* (not *waschen Sie bitte mein Haar*); *Anzug anprobieren* (not *anpassen*); *Briefe schickt man eingeschrieben* (better than *als Einschreiben*); *der Dollar steht auf RM 2,40* (not *steht RM 2,40*); *hundert Dollar* (not *hundert Dollars*, which appears twice); *Autodroschkenhalteplatz* and *Bahnhofsvorhalle* are ugly and useless fabrications; *und was noch* for English "and what not" is hardly correct: *und was sonst noch alles* may be suggested; *unser Tagesgericht* for "daily special?"; does a German in a restaurant say *Das hört sich gut an* ("that sounds good") to the waiter after hearing the menu?; *der erste Tisch des Abendessens* for "the first supper table" aboard ship?; *mit Schlafwagen* (not *mit Bettkarte*) at the ticket office; *es regnet Bindfäden* (not *Bindfaden*); *es gibt hier so viel Neues, daß mir der Kopf schwirrt* (not *daß sich mein Kopf im Kreise dreht*); *ich esse lieber im Restaurant* (not *ich esse lieber aus* for "to eat out"); *Hello, Fahrer* for "Hello, driver!" is hardly customary; *eine Umleitung von zehn Kilometern* (not *Kilometer*); the drumstick of a chicken is not a *Keule*, but *Schenkel*; *zerriss mir die Hose* (not *zerriß meine Hose*) etc.

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Joseph und seine Brüder,
Thomas Manns Roman; eine Einführung
von Käte Hamburger. *Bermann-Fischer Verlag, Stockholm, 1945. Pp. 160.*

The task of reviewing Käte Hamburger's profound analysis of Thomas Mann's gigantic exegesis of the Joseph myth of the Bible is more stirring than just attempting another literary interpretation of an interpretation of an interpretation. For in her honest and modest work of following the tracks of Thomas Mann's vast historical and psycho-analytical research, the author had to interpret Thomas Mann's own ethical and social evolution. She follows the 'greatest man of letters of our time' through the half-century of his development from *The Buddenbrooks* to his last Moses novel *The Law*.

The Buddenbrooks was influenced by Nietzsche's fateful contraposition of Life and Spirit, by the decadent idea that spiritualization means weakening of biological values. (Since that time we all

have learned that, though moralizing intellectualization may mean sentimental decadence, biological brutality certainly means self-destruction). In the time of *The Magic Mountain* Thomas Mann feels that love bridges the gap between spirit and life, and recognizes the poet's loving responsibilities toward society. But in his monumental Joseph myth he descends the steps to gnostic wisdom, which shows that Nietzsche's polarity between life and spirit was itself too narrow, too weak. The basic tension is between Matter and Spirit, and Life is the loving, struggling union of both. In *Tonio Kröger* Thomas Mann found as the function of the poet (the mirror of the eternal creator) "to stand between the two worlds, and be in none at home". In his *Joseph*, however, going back to the roots of human culture, he finds this is the function of man as such, to unite earth and heaven, be a mediator between creation and creator. Thus this novel is shown to be the myth of man.

The myth of the Bible offers a pair of unequal brothers, Esau and Jacob, the brutish man of earth and the meek man of the Spirit. Joseph unites them both. In Egypt he helps to establish the rule of the God of light and spirit, of Atom, Abraham's Adon. And at the same time he is the healthy worldly "Provider", the wise administrator of agriculture. Thus Thomas Mann shows the synthesis which mankind needs to overcome Schopen-

hauer's Nietzsche's and Spengler's pessimism: Spiritualization without biological decadence is the goal of man.

The poetic form in which Thomas Mann presents his *Divina Commedia*, she characterizes with the words 'irony' and 'humor' . . . And this peculiarity of Thomas Mann's style may seem strange and even shocking, considering the seriousness of the topic. Irony is in a sense more humble, but in a way more arrogant than fanatic-objective conviction. But Thomas Mann achieves with it another synthesis, which is needed in our time, the reconciliation between sophisticated skepsis and naive religious faith. And maybe our time could use Thomas Mann's loving brand of irony, and even the type of skepticism of a political poet: In our age of the 'fission of the Atom' we can pray no more "thou sure and firm-set earth!", we can not be sure of all the -isms of materialism, since we made matter itself relative. But we can have faith in the eternal Spirit, Joseph's 'Aton' and Abraham's 'Adon', that He may lead us to Thomas Mann's ideal of "Christian Humanism".

Thus Käte Hamburger's philosophical interpretation helps us not only to understand Thomas Mann's genius, but to solve the ethical, social, and cultural problems of our time.

Dr. Wolfgang J. Weilgart
Xavier University, New Orleans, La.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Volume XXXVIII	December, 1946	Number 8
Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti / Alcuin Hemmen, O. S. B.	450	
R. M. Rilke's <i>Malte Laurids Brigge</i> / Norbert Fuerst	463	
Damian, Posthumous Novel of Herman Stehr / Karl S. Weimar	479	
Gerhart Hauptmann — zum Abschied / Ernst Jockers	493	
Psychologisch-Historischer Hintergrund im Deutschen Sendungsbewußtsein / Richard Kuehnemund	495	
News and Notes	501	
Book Reviews	503	

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